Hafa Adai!

Santa Flight 2024 to arrive today. PAGE 2
A new era of cardiac care on Tinian. PAGE 3

$1

19 DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIV, Issue No. 244

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DURING VISIT TO GUAM

Taiwanese President Lai meets with 'allies'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te visited Guam with CNMI leaders joining Guam in honoring his excellency through a luncheon yesterday.

Yesterday, Guam's leadership held a luncheon in honor of his excellency Lai and joining Guam leaders were Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and

See TAIWANESE on Page 4

繁榮南島 智慧永續
SMART AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR A PROSPEROUS AUSTRONESIAN REGION
歡迎賴清德總統蒞臨關島
Welcome President Lai Ching-te to Guam

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dignitaries who were present during the luncheon in honor of Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te in Guam pose for a photo yesterday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, right, presents Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te with a resolution in his honor during a special luncheon yesterday in Guam.

CEDA earns ROI of over 5% in FY 2024

» 3 companies are active beneficiaries for Qualifying Certificate Program, 1 under review

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
delatorreferdie@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

The Commonwealth Economic Development Authority took advantage of higher interest rates and earned a return of investment of over 5% throughout the spring and summer months in fiscal year 2024.

CEDA in their FY 2024 Citizen-Centric Report submitted early this week to the CNMI Office of the Public

See CEDA on Page 4

DPS chief reiterates $1K reward for tips leading to conviction

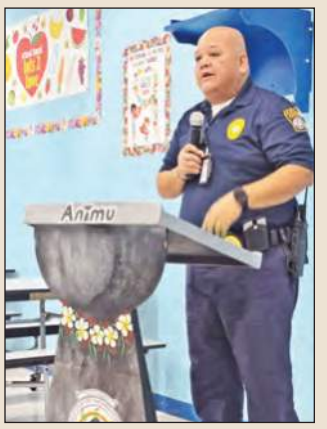
By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Anthony Macaranas reiterated that a reward of $1,000 is on the table for those who report crimes leading to a conviction during a townhall meeting last Wednesday at the William S. Reyes Middle School main hall cafeteria.

See DPS on Page 4

RACQUEL FLOYD

Dozens of residents of Precinct 2 attended the townhall meeting that aims to promote a safe community, a safe village, and a clean island.



RACQUEL FLOYD

Department of Public Safety Commissioner Anthony Macaranas has offered a $1,000 reward to those who will report any crime during the townhall meeting hosted by the Saipan Mayor's Office last Wednesday night at the William S. Reyes Middle School main hall cafeteria.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" B. Camacho discusses the importance of fostering positive relationships with neighbors.

CPA passes resolution to re-instate FY24 airport rates

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority has passed a resolution to repeal previously adopted airport rate increases and re-instating rates from fiscal year 2024.

Last Wednesday, the CPA board held a special board meeting where they discussed CPA Resolution 2024-5 that essentially reverses the recently imposed Airport rate increases and reverting rates back to the rates imposed last

See CPA on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL

Saipan International School is proud to announce that senior MJ Magno has been awarded a full scholarship through the highly competitive QuestBridge National College Match program to attend Boston College.

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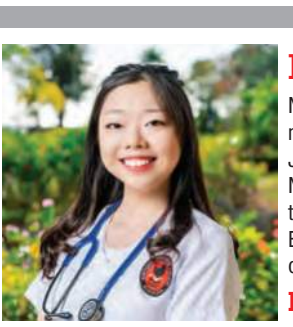

LOCAL

Northern Marianas College 2024 nursing graduate Yi Huang Jenkins has joined the long list of NMC students who have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses or NCLEX-RN.

PAGE 5

LIFE & STYLE

As much as theaters are humming right now, with "Wicked" and "Moana 2" bringing moviegoers by the droves, it's been a fairly bruising movie year.

PAGE 11

GOT A NEWS TIP?

TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

Santa Flight 2024 to arrive today

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The highly anticipated Santa Flight 2024 brought to the Marianas by the Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 will arrive on Saipan today.

The Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 will once again spread holiday cheer across the region with the highly anticipated Santa Flight 2024.

This cherished annual tradition delivers holiday joy to remote communities, embodying the spirit of giving and fostering connections with our local communities.

HSC-25 invites the community to celebrate the holidays with the annual Santa Flight on Dec. 6

"The Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 25 Island Knights will conduct its annual Santa Flight over various locations on Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands beginning at 2pm on Friday Dec. 6," said a press release.

For individuals interested in seeing Santa in the sky, the times are:

- 3:45pm: Songsong and Sinapalo, Rota
- 4:20pm: San Jose, Tinian
- 4:30pm: Koblerville, Saipan
- 4:40pm: Saipan hospital
- 4:45pm: Kagman, Saipan

HSC-25 is the Navy's only squadron that maintains a 24-hour search and rescue and medical evacuation alert posture, directly supporting the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam and Joint Region Marianas.

Since 1984, HSC-25 has launched more than 2,445 missions, resulting in 762 medical evacuations, and rescuing 475 lives from waters and jungles of the island chain.

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A new era of cardiac care on Tinian

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

After the unveiling and turnover ceremony of the portable echocardiogram machine funded by the Rotary International Foundation at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. last Monday morning, Rotary Club of Saipan officers and members Joann Aquino, Irene Holl, Dr. Peter Gregor, and Glenn Perez with Tokyo West Rotary Club's Mikiya Yajima, Jun Nakamura Honorary member Dr. Ana Lorenz-Gregor and CHCC technician flew to the Tinian Health Center last Tuesday to award the certificate of portable echocardiogram machine to improve the health of the people of Tinian.

They were greeted by the clinic's resident director Keith Nabors and staff with Rep. Patrick San Nicolas (R-Tinian) and Tinain Mayor's Office staff and Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan treating them to lunch at JC Cafe.

San Nicolas volunteered to test the machine and Aquino said in an interview that it's amazing how a portable machine,the size of a briefcase can detect abnormalities and other problems with the heart's chambers, the size, and thickening of the walls or enlargement of the heart, clot tumors, etc.

Aquino mentioned that the medical technician will record and take pictures of the heart and send them to the doctor to read.

According to Aquino, it was the first time that the Rotary Club of Saipan served as a host club for a Rotary Foundation Global Grant.

"This project is especially meaningful as it represents the first time the Rotary Club of Saipan has served as a host club for a Rotary Foundation Global Grant. Our partnership with the Rotary Club of Tokyo-West, who chose this project to mark their prestigious 70th anniversary, exemplifies the true spirit of Rotary International—building bridges across oceans to serve humanity," said Aquino in her speech during the machine's turnover ceremony at CHCC last Monday.

She further added that since the machine is portable, the technician will be the one to go to Tinian and Rota which will no longer burden the patients with expensive air transportation between the islands for these vital cardiac screenings.

The Rota schedule of visit is still pending because it will depend on Gregor's appointment with patients.

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CEDA

From page 1

Auditor, disclosed that in FY 2023, they achieved an ROI of over 4% and outperformed the market benchmark, in aggregate, over the past few years.

The report noted that interest rates have fallen as expected, and CEDA anticipates further interest rate drops in the near future.

CEDA is currently implementing an investment strategy "to maximize the current rates through diversified redemption timeframes again all while considering liquidity needs."

The agency anticipates interest rates to fall below 4% and remain within this range for some time.

The report said CEDA will continue their investments' strategy to maximize returns in accordance with the CEDA Act, as amended.

In FY 2024, the agency's assets were $55,827,833 and its liabilities were $21,153,050, leaving $34,674,783 in net position.

In FY 2023, CEDA's assets were $41,850,023 and its liabilities were $3,289,522, leaving $38,560,501 in net position.

In FY 2024, the agency's operating revenues were $2,850,931 and its net income was $3,885,718.

In FY 2023, CEDA's operating revenues were $1,724,132 and its net income was $234,491.

Regarding CEDA's Qualifying Certificate Program, the report disclosed that in FY 2024, there are three active beneficiaries—the Saipan Globe International Group, Bridge Capital LLC, and Marshall Holdings Inc.

The QC Program provides for certain tax incentives for businesses that meet the Program requirements in return for their investment in the CNMI.

At a public hearing in October 2017, Saipan Globe International Group disclosed that it proposed to build a $76.8-million hotel called Saipan Globe Hotel located in San Roque.

Bridge Capital is a financial services company specializing in real estate acquisition, development, financing, and corporate lending.

Marshall Holdings' subsidiaries are Direct EV LLC, Pro Fit Racking LLC, Marianas Coffee Company CNMI LLC, Coldwell International LLC, and Coldwell Energy Corp.

In late September 2024, the report disclosed that CEDA received a new QC application from J&P Holdings CNMI LLC, a passenger aviation company in inter-island transportation.

CEDA believes that this new venture has the potential to bring significant benefits to the CNMI, and that they are presently reviewing its application.

J&P Holdings is proposing an investment of over $8 million to expand their services to include air passenger transportation within the CNMI.

On CEDA's economic development activities, the report shared that the agency showcased the CNMI at the SelectUSA 2024 Investment Summit, the highest profile event in the U.S. The summit facilitated business investment by connecting thousands of investors, companies, economic development organizations, and industry experts.

CEDA also shared that in line with their mandate to seek mainland investors, they paid for an LA Times advertisement that featured the CNMI on Aug. 1, 2024. CEDA said they trust that the CNMI has the potential to be a thriving business hub, and they invite investors to explore the opportunities it offers.

With respect to CEDA's Development Banking Division, the report pointed out that as financial advisor and coordinator for any borrowing of the CNMI government and its instrumentalities, the agency is actively pursuing financing for the CNMI through the Bond Markets and the Bank of Guam.

CEDA's aim is to close out these transactions by the end of 2024 while proactively seeking out the most competitive debt service rates and exploring other financing alternatives.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

DPS

From page 1

"You give that information, we get a conviction, you get $1,000. Please don't go around and make up stories and make your neighbor get arrested. The board of directors of the [NMI] Crime Stoppers are really serious about this—you give real good information, we would pay for that information," said Macaranas during the event hosted by the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Macaranas emphasized communication and collaboration with law enforcement are important and that building trust with police officers is crucial for effective cooperation.

Macaranas encouraged reporting crimes within the community, even anonymously, and gave emphasis on reporting even if it involves family or neighbors.

"We care about our community, we care about your neighbor, so please do not hesitate to report... If you don't want to get involved and you want to report that anonymously, you have the Crime Stopper where you can report it, it's (670)234-7272, you give that information and if it's legit, we'll follow it up," he added.

Dozens of residents of Precinct 2 attended the townhall meeting that aims to promote a safe community, a safe village, and a clean island.

Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" B. Camacho discussed the importance of fostering positive relationships with neighbors and provided a scenario illustrating the crucial role of neighbors in an emergency is presented.

"Grab the phone, there's nothing to be ashamed to report anybody especially the family, your daughter, your son knowingly that they're using drugs. I came across a family like that, he says, 'mayor I am ashamed to report my own family member. This is going to make the family embarrassed.' I said, 'no and that's the time you're gonna be ashamed if you fail to report it and they start hurting you,'" said Camacho.

The shame associated with reporting family drug use is a significant barrier and Camacho reiterated that the government system and drug rehabilitation programs exist to help.

"We have a system in the government, the criminal justice, drug court, [Hinemlo O'hala Para Enteramenti Recovery Center] program, and it's working. I got these numbers at this thing, and I asked Judge [Teresa] Kim Tenorio, out of the 10 that went to the drug court, graduate, how many of them return back? She says one."

Moreover, Camacho made a call to action to establish a Neighborhood Watch Program wherein the initiative involves contacting neighbors and building relationships and that the plan to organize and expand the program is underway.

The intent of the program is to build partnership with the community to reduce crime and improve livability, instill a greater sense of security while reducing the fear of crime, and create a sense of community and put the neighbor back in the neighborhood.

Camacho said the program will only be successful if everyone in the community—all ages and genders—are involved.

"The key is people need to know what's going on, people need to be valued, and people need to feel that this program works," he said.

CPA

From page 1

Oct. 1, 2023.

According to the resolution that was passed last Wednesday, CPA management met with aircraft operators' representatives to present and discuss the projected 2025 landing fees and terminal rental rates. However, incumbent aircraft operators raised concerns regarding the new rates.

Following the discussion, the resolution states, the CPA board found that it is in the best interest of the CPA to reimplement the rates that were in place prior to Oct. 1, 2023, in order to retain its incumbent aircraft operators and to attract new aircraft operators.

Last Oct. 30, 2024, a majority of the board voted to adopt a revised fiscal year 2025 budget for CPA based on projected landing fees and terminal rental rates.

The new rates reflected an increase in terminal rental rates and landing fees. Specifically, terminal rental rates went from $34.92 to $41.07 and the landing fees went from $15.25 to $19.73. For the commuter terminals that serve Rota and Tinian passengers, the board raised the terminal rate to $16.43 from $13.97 and the landing fee to $11.84 from $9.15.

Prior to Oct. 1, 2023, the terminal fee at Saipan international airport was $19.49 and the landing fee was $8.01.

Since fiscal year 2023, CPA has had no choice but to increase fees because as an autonomous agency, CPA has to garner funds through fees and rates to subsidize its operations.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, back in September 2023, the previous CPA board adopted a new rate methodology that reflected a 90% increase in landing fees and a 79% increase in terminal rental fees which makes up CPA's fiscal year 2024 budget.

With the adopted budget, the CPA terminal rental rates for the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport's main terminal went up from $19.49 per square foot to $34.92. Meanwhile, the terminal rental rates for all CNMI commuter terminals went up from $7.79 to $13.97.

As for landing fees, with the 90% increase, CPA charges international airline carriers $15.25 per thousand pounds of certified maximum gross landing weight of the aircraft; they were previously being charged $8.01. As for CNMI commuter terminals, the 90%-increase brings landing fees up from $4.81 to $9.15.

In a previous interview with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, he raised concerns about CPA's airport rates.

"I'm concerned about that because obviously Asia Pacific is a very competitive destination. We're competing with Thailand, Vietnam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Japan, Korea so we need to make sure we don't impact the feasibility and viability of international airlines that come to the Commonwealth," he said.

TAIWANESE

From page 1

members of the CNMI Legislature.

Lai, in addressing he Marianas' stakeholders, shared that his Guam stopover is one of many stopovers he will be making across the Pacific to visit Taiwan's allies.

"This is my first official overseas trip since my inauguration on May 20, we are making a trip to our diplomatic allies. The three Pacific allies we're visiting and the places we are making stopovers at share the same Austronesian roots with Taiwan, so we are one big family. Everywhere I go during this trip, I feel deeply connected to the local people. Taiwan's three allies and U.S. stops we are making stopovers share the same universal values with Taiwan which is democracy, freedom, and human rights. We are all partners working together to contribute to the peace and stability of the world. That is why every person I have met during the trip whether it was a handshake or a hug, we encouraged each other I felt deeply connected to them," he said.

"I also want to thank the United States government for arranging my trip based on the principles of safety, dignity, convenience, and comfort. I thank the United States government for making this trip possible and successful," he added.

Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero said in her remarks that the theme of President Lai's Pacific trip, "Smart and Sustainable Developments for a Prosperous Austronesian Region," is one that deeply aligns with the goals and vision of the people in Guam.

"Like you, we recognize the importance of innovations and sustainability as key drivers of prosperity, particularly for island nations whose livelihoods are intertwined with the health of our environment and the strength of our communities. As small islands navigating a vast and complex world, we know that our strength lies in unity. Like a school of fish moving in synchronized harmony, we are more resilient and agile when we work together. Together we can overcome challenges and seize opportunities propelling our region toward a more sustainable and prosperous future. As leaders, we are entrusted with the responsibility to uplift our people. To provide quality of life to our people, to empower our communities and ensure that progress is inclusive and enduring," she said.

Leon Guerrero added that Guam celebrates the spirit of collaboration and friendship that Taiwan embodies.

"Not just with us, but across the globe. Our connection with Taiwan runs very deep, it is a connection that spans several millennia's as we share a common Austronesian ancestry with the indigenous population of Taiwan. We look forward to many more exchanges between our islands. Sharing knowledge, culture, opportunities, and traditions that will enrich both our peoples and contribute to the collective advancement of the Austronesian region," she said.

Palacios, for his part, expressed his gratitude that he was invited to join a momentous occasion.

"It is indeed an honor for us to join Gov. Lou Guerrero in honoring President Lai to the Mariana Islands. We share a distinct identity with the people of Guam with the only difference being politically. But we are all Americans. We share a distinct common value with Taiwan. That is democracy, friendship, cultural similarities, changes and we look forward to an enduring relationship despite the geopolitical environment we now live in. We continue to support Taiwan in making sure that our democracy across the region continues and endures," he said.

Sen. Celina Babauta (D-Saipan) shared that she was deeply inspired by President Lai's powerful message.

"I am deeply inspired by President Lai powerful message of hope and comity among our governments and our people. His message, with emphasis on peace and democracy, resonated with my beliefs that both can co-exist mutually. The ties between the CNMI and Taiwan are deep and enduring. Our shared history dates back centuries when our ancestors were part of the same maritime empire that traversed the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. This shared history has left an indelible mark on our languages, our cultures, and our way of life. I strongly believe that with our shared history, the CNMI possesses the potential to flourish and bloom economically," she said.

Before heading to Guam, Lai already visited Hawaii, Marshall Islands, and Tuvalu and also has plans to a make a final stopover to Palau.

Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, and Palau are three Pacific Island countries that are among 12 governments that recognize Taiwan diplomatically.

Magno continues SIS tradition of QuestBridge excellence

Saipan International School is proud to announce that senior MJ Magno has been awarded a full scholarship through the highly competitive QuestBridge National College Match program to attend Boston College. This milestone marks the sixth consecutive year an SIS student has earned this prestigious honor, showcasing the school's ongoing dedication to nurturing academic excellence and preparing students for global success.

Magno follows in the footsteps of fellow SIS QuestBridge scholars, including Malika Miyawaki (Emory), Mac Guintu (Emory), Cevina Hwang (Princeton), Tiana Cabrera (Wesleyan), Lisha Lai (Boston College), and Stephanie Kim (Wesleyan). Together, these students have secured over $2 million in scholarship funding from QuestBridge, a testament to the strength of SIS's college preparatory programs.

At SIS, Magno has exemplified leadership as treasurer of the High School Student Council and demonstrated a passion for academics and extracurricular pursuits. As an AP Scholar with distinction and a recipient of the AP Capstone Diploma, she embodies the qualities QuestBridge seeks in its scholars. MJ plans to continue her academic journey at Boston College, where she will pursue a degree in nursing.

QuestBridge, a nationally recognized nonprofit, connects outstanding low-income students with full scholarships to some of the best colleges and universities in the United States. This year, out of over 17,000 applicants, MJ was selected as one of just 1,755 Match Scholarship Recipients—a recognition of her hard work, academic excellence, and leadership abilities.

Boston College, a renowned Jesuit institution in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, is celebrated for its rigorous academics and commitment to service. Consistently ranked among the top national universities, it offers a transformative liberal arts education designed to prepare students for leadership and service in their communities and beyond.

Founded in 1994, SIS is the CNMI's leading independent K-12 institution. With a focus on academic rigor and individualized support, SIS offers a robust Advanced Placement program, including AP Capstone, to ensure students like MJ are equipped to succeed at the world's most prestigious universities.

Dr. Ron Snyder, headmaster of SIS, praised Magno's achievement: "We are immensely proud of MJ for earning this incredible opportunity. Her dedication and determination exemplify the values we encourage in all of our students. This is a momentous accomplishment not just for MJ but for the entire SIS community. We can't wait to see all that she will accomplish at Boston College and beyond."

Angela Taflinger, SIS counselor, shared her admiration, "MJ is a remarkable student whose perseverance and commitment set her apart. She has the passion and capability to be a leader and make meaningful contributions to the world. I admire her so much."

SIS congratulates Magno and her family on this achievement. Her success is a reflection of her hard work and the supportive SIS community that has championed her journey every step of the way. ***(PR)***

NMC nursing graduate Jenkins passes NCLEX-RN

Northern Marianas College 2024 nursing graduate Yi Huang Jenkins has joined the long list of NMC students who have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses or NCLEX-RN.

Nursing graduates must pass the NCLEX-RN to be able to practice nursing as a Registered Nurse. The exam tests nursing graduates' knowledge, skills, and abilities to certify that they can apply entry-level nursing practices correctly.

"The college is always incredibly proud to see more NMC nursing graduates pass this exam," said NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero. "Congratulations to Yi Huang on successfully passing the NCLEX-RN."

"We are so proud of Yi for passing the NCLEX-RN," said Nursing Department chair Rosa T. Aldan. "The Nursing Team is excited for her to begin her career as a registered nurse, joining her peers at the bedside."

Jenkins, who graduated from NMC this spring, chose the nursing field for the abundance of opportunities and aspirations she finds in the industry despite its challenges. She attributes much of her determination to her faith. "My motivation for pursuing nursing is to glorify the Lord by caring for more people in need," she said.

When studying for the NCLEX, Jenkins emphasized the importance of time management and effort, stating that they are directly proportional to rewards.

"I believe God wants me to become a safe, responsible, and caring nurse," Jenkins said. "When I was preparing for NCLEX, I studied almost every day from morning to night. This is very difficult because it requires a lot of self-control, patience, and persistence."

Akin to her motivation for pursuing her nursing degree with NMC, she stated that her faith was a significant factor in her drive toward obtaining her nursing certification.

Along with the help of the weekly Kaplan sessions, Jenkins highlighted the importance of her NMC nursing instructors, stating that her success is inseparable from their guidance.

She personally credited her skills to her instructors, "I learned how important it is to prioritize my studies through the Nursing Department chair, Mrs. Rosa Aldan. I learned nursing knowledge and gained continuous valuable support from Mr. Johnny Aldan. I learned essential clinical nursing skills from Mrs. Breanna. I learned strict sterile procedures and practical nursing care from Mrs. Tasha. I expanded my knowledge on pediatric care from Dr. Lee. I am also thankful to the administrative assistant, Andrew, for always being there and supporting us whenever we need help."

Her advice to NMC students who are planning to take the NCLEX, Jenkins encouraged the prioritization of studying and effort, along with the usage of faith as a form of support. "Study not only to pass the exam, but also to develop safer clinical skills and practices as a nurse soon," she advised.

Jenkins is currently in New Hampshire and looking forward to working in different nursing fields, gaining abundant experiences in local hospitals, and contributing to society. ***(PR)***

Ken Aqua Hotel & Resort, Inc. dba. Aqua Resort Club Saipan is a hotel in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. Aqua Resort Club Saipan is currently seeking an Accounting Manager to join our team located at 9543 Chalan Pale Arnold Road, San Roque, Saipan, MP, 96950.

Accounting Manager

Responsibilities:

Assist the Finance Manager with providing the Owner, General Manager, and other management team with accurate, timely, and relevant financial data. Manage all phases of accounts payable and receivables. Review accounts for discrepancies and reconcile differences. Establish tables of accounts and assign entries to proper accounts. Prepare financials statements and debtor's listings. Prepares and bills accounts receivables to clients with the supporting charges and statements. Calculate and distribute wages and salaries. Audit payroll and personal records to determine worker's compensation coverage, liabilities, and compliance with tax. Inspect cash on hand, notes receivables and payables, negotiable securities, and canceled checks to confirm records and accurate. Ensuring cash flows are adequate for effective operations. Verify and monitor recorded transactions and report irregularities to the management. Reviewing of guests, city, and deposit ledgers to validate proper payment and revenue posting. Coordinate with the operational departments (Front Office, Sales & Marketing, and Food & Beverage) for any imbalances or differences found in the guest's ledgers. Maintaining and transferring money between bank accounts as required. Providing direction to the hotel operational team in areas related to finance, financial reports, internal controls, labor management and payroll. Preparing financial reports using US GAAP and presenting financial report in meetings. Compute taxes owed and prepare tax returns, ensuring compliance with payment, reporting, and other tax requirements. Ensure correct taxation are applied to all billing software, particular to Hotel's Property Management System (PMS) and Point of Sale (POS) System. Provide direction to the audit team so as to ensure proper revenue posting. Managing the audit function in the hotel. Prepare detailed reports on audit findings and advise the finance manager on financial planning. Assist in the yearly external auditing of the hotel.

Qualifications:

- A US Bachelor's degree or a foreign equivalent degree in Accounting.
- 60 months of experience as Accountant, Auditor or other related positions.

Candidates who fulfill the aforementioned requirements are invited to submit their resume to Sachiko Gerrard: hradmin@aquaresort-saipan.com or to PO Box 500009, Saipan, MP, 96950.

CEDA
COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
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www.developcnmi.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Friday, December 6, 2024

PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 8-41, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) THRU ITS CHAIRMAN, HEREBY INFORMS THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT THE CEDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024, AT 1:30 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE CEDA CONFERENCE ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, CEDA BUILDING, OLEAI SAIPAN. THE AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING IS AS FOLLOWS:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
   A. Call to Order
   B. Roll Call
   C. Adoption of Agenda
II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. PERSONNEL MATTERS **(Board Action)**
   A. Recruitment of Executive Director
   B. Recruitment of Economic Development Manager
   C. Comptroller's Compensation
IV. QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE (QC) PROGRAM **(Board Action)**
   A. Review of the application for a QC by J&P Holdings CNMI LLC
V. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VI. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

/s/
FRANCISCO M. RABAULIMAN
Chairman, Board of Directors

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net
EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

This is to inform all Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)-approved Contractors (including Tinian and Rota contractors) that we are currently updating our Approved Contractor Listing for calendar year 2025. In order for NMHC to extend your company's inclusion on our listing for another year, you must submit the documentations listed below before or by December 30, 2024. Those companies that are not on our list of approved contractors but wish to be included are likewise encouraged to submit the following:

1. Valid CNMI Business License
2. Current Financial Statements (certified by the principle executive officer and principle financial officer)
3. 2 Years Business Gross Revenue (BGR) Tax Returns
4. 2 Years Corporate Income Tax Returns (1120)
5. Clearance Letter from the Department of Labor
6. Certificate of Compliance from the Revenue & Taxation Office
7. Workmen's Compensation Policy
8. Name of Insurance Company(ies) Currently Dealing With
9. A list of on-going/completed projects showing name of project, start and completion dates, and contract amounts
10. At least three (3) reference letters from owners of the completed projects
11. List of vendors and suppliers and at least three reference letters from them (CONSTRUCTION QUARRY, READY-MIX CEMENT & HARDWARE STORES)
12. Company background
13. Articles of Incorporation & Company By-Laws, if applicable
14. Annual Report (Registrar of Corporations)
15. Registration on the System for Award Management (SAM) official U.S. Government website and provide Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)

NMHC encourages Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MBE/WBE) to participate in this Request for Qualifications and that they will be afforded full opportunity to participate and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, or disability status.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Threatening the FBI—Director Chris Wray should stay and Kash Patel must never take over

Donald Trump's Saturday night announcement that he's going to nominate a new director of the FBI, the woefully unqualified and completely unfit Kash Patel, is premature by a few years because the director's position is not open. Director Chris Wray was nominated by Trump in his first Oval Office stint and confirmed 92–5 by the Senate, starting his 10-year term on Aug. 2, 2017. Unless Wray leaves before the summer of 2027, there is no vacancy to fill.

Wray has not done anything as head of the FBI to warrant his removal for cause, which should be the only way for a president to get rid of a director.

In the 50 years since Congress created the modern FBI leadership following the unaccountable 48-year reign of J. Edgar Hoover, presidents have largely respected the independence directors have in their non-renewable decade in office.

Yes, President Bill Clinton did remove FBI boss Bill Sessions soon after Clinton took office in 1993, but that was only after a damning Department of Justice by the departing Bush administration report found that Sessions had improperly billed the government for private expenses.

The other instance, with far less justification, was in 2017 when Trump dumped FBI Director Jim Comey. The cover story was that Comey had badly botched the Hillary Clinton e-mail investigation in the days before the 2016 election, which Comey did badly botch, upsetting everyone. The real reason was that Trump didn't want the Kremlin's efforts to help his campaign to be probed.

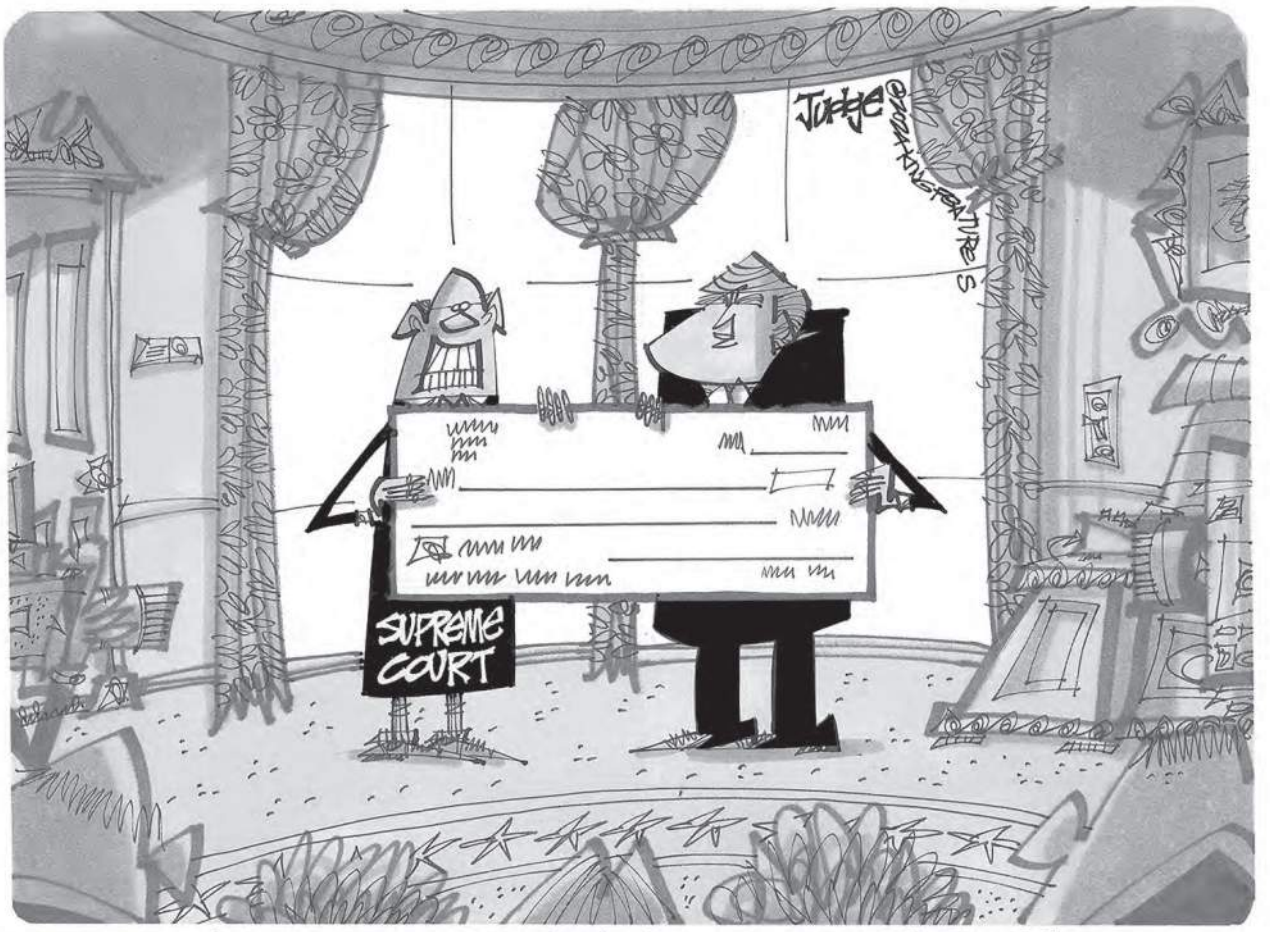
As to any reason to dismiss Wray, there are none. Expect the bogeyman of the deep state, which is where Patel comes in. Patel, a former Trump aide who has no business being atop of the FBI, or the CIA (as has been floated by Trump in the past) wrote a 2023 book called: "Government Gangsters: The Deep State, the Truth, and the Battle for Our Democracy."

The book's Appendix B, called "Members of the Executive Branch Deep State," is a list of 60 names in alphabetical order. The second name is Lloyd Austin, the current secretary of defense. Bill Barr, Trump's attorney general, is the fifth name. Near the end of Trump's first term when Trump mused with making Patel the FBI's deputy director, Barr told the White House chief of staff: "Over my dead body."

Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton is sixth on Patel's list, while Joe Biden is No. 8. And that's just that's the first page. The names on the other three pages include Trump's White Chief Counsel Pat Cipollone, Hillary Clinton, Jim Comey, Mark Esper, who Trump fired as defense secretary, current Attorney General Merrick Garland and Trump's CIA Director Gina Haspel, who threatened to resign when Trump suggested making Patel the spy agency's deputy director.

Other names are Kamala Harris, Special Counsel Robert Hur, who probed Joe Biden's handling of classified documents, and former chairman of the joint chiefs Mark Milley.

See FBI on Page 7



Will the US ever elect a woman president?

By JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp is an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service.

Will the U.S. ever elect a woman president? I first considered this question in a column I wrote in August of 2016. Hillary Clinton, Yale-educated lawyer, former first lady, former senator from New York and former secretary of state, was running for president. Her opponent was a guy named Donald Trump, a reality TV star and a businessman of indifferent success who had a reputation for stiffing contractors, skirting the rules and getting in trouble for declining to rent to Black renters.

Trump was also known for infidelity, divorce and a long series of demeaning remarks about women. In fact, a couple of months after I wrote my column, Trump was caught on tape bragging about being able to commit sexual assault with impunity if you're a celebrity.

In short, Hillary Clinton's chances for becoming the first woman president looked good; America chose Trump.

But my column wasn't necessarily in support of Clinton herself; I wondered if women could bring something to the White House from which the country could benefit.

I tried to avoid thorny questions about innate differences between men and women, but I suggested that boys and girls are socialized differently, which might mean that girls grow up with values and qualities that are different from boys' and that could be valuable in our nation's highest office.

For example, it's difficult to imagine a woman whose favorite movie is "Patton" and who would watch it obsessively, as Richard Nixon did while he was pursuing a misguided war in Vietnam, bombing civilians and invading Cambodia.

It's hard to imagine a woman so infatuated with the mythical qualities of Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie that she could say, as Lyndon Johnson once did about Vietnam, "Hell, it's just like the Alamo."

And what woman would say "Bring 'em on" to people whom she believes are intent on killing us, as George W. Bush challenged Iraqi insurgents to do.

In 2016, I suggested that this is the sort of swaggering, tough-guy bravado that's learned by boys on the playing fields of their elementary schools and reinforced on the football field, in boot camp and, in George Bush's case, jet pilot school. Many men get over it, but many don't. And when the ones who don't make their way into high public office, our foreign policy can become hyper-aggressive and heavy-handed, a blustery macho test of who blinks first.

Women leaders, of course, can be strong and resolute, as well—Margaret Thatcher and Golda Meir come to mind. But after growing up with less physical strength, women may be less likely to turn to force as the first resort; they may be willing to talk rather than bluff or bluster, to negotiate rather than fight. This isn't weakness so much as it is wisdom. Or so I naively speculated in the innocent days of 2016.

Now a woman has again lost the presidency to man—in fact, the same man! If anything, that man embodies more bullying machismo than he did eight years ago. In the meantime, he's been adjudged liable for sexual assault and for defaming a particular woman while he continues to defame others.

Trump has nominated a few women for roles in his administration, but they tend to reflect his version of manly values: Linda McMahon founded the WWE, and Kristi Noem is best known for bragging about shooting a dog that seemed, to her, untrainable.

And the men coming into power? J.D. Vance's views on women aren't exactly enlightened. Pete Hegseth, Trump's nominee to head the Department of Defense, says that women have no place in combat. (I look forward to watching him rationalize that position to war hero Sen. Tammy Duckworth.)

Even Hegseth's mother once called him a man who "belittles, lies, cheats, sleeps around and uses women for his own power and ego." At least Trump's mother never said that aloud.

Alas, our slow, fitful progress toward electing a woman president has gone into reverse. My eight-year-old hopes for a new paradigm that favors negotiation over power, community over conflict and maternalism over machismo seem quaint or naïve and, for the present at least, increasingly elusive.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

A kinder and gentler mass deportation

By DAVID BUTLER
The Fulcrum

David Butler is a husband, father, grandfather, business executive, entrepreneur and political observer.

There is an argument that the single most important issue resulting in Donald Trump's victory over Kamala Harris is the illegal immigration that the Biden-Harris administration not only tolerated but encouraged. The problem had grown untenable by Trump's first victory in 2016 and was a key issue then as well.

Yet from the beginning, the Biden-Harris team not only canceled and reversed the tools Trump used to get immigration under control, but increased the amount of immigration for those not qualifying under asylum rules by not deporting those whose asylum was denied.

The economy and inflation were the other big issues, and the immigration crisis directly connects to these as well. The electorate saw illegal immigration being encouraged and tax dollars being spent to accommodate this and provide benefits to immigrants while voters' own financial status was suffering. Exit polls suggest that a majority of working-class voters and those without a college degree were for Trump. And a substantial number of these voters concluded that illegal immigrants would soon become their economic competition and drive down wages.

Whether it was 10 million, 15 million or 20 million, a tiny percentage of these immigrants, especially those classified as "got aways" and likely totaling 100,000 or more, are violent criminals, terrorists and/or agents of foreign powers that seek to harm and even destroy America.

An audit report issued by the Department of Homeland Security in August 2024 indicated that 32,000 children had not appeared in court on the appointed date and were at higher risk of being trafficked. There were also almost 300,000 children who had not yet been issued a notice to appear in court and Immigrant and Customs Enforcement did not have the tools to identify where they were.

It is little wonder then that polls before the election showed a significant majority approved of the idea of mass deportation. While many who favor mass deportation may not fully understand how it might roll out and may be in favor of exemptions in many cases, these views of the current illegal immigration problem clearly drove voters.

Trump will obviously re-establish his border and immigration policies and likely strengthen them with executive orders. I believe he will invoke 8 U.S.C. §1182(f), which provides:

"Whenever the President finds that the entry of any aliens or of any class of aliens into the United States would be detrimental to the interests of the United States, he may by proclamation, and for such period as he shall deem necessary, suspend the entry of all aliens or any class of aliens as immigrants or nonimmigrants, or impose on the entry of aliens any restrictions he may deem to be appropriate."

Of course, nothing is simple in government and any such invocation will be challenged in the courts. In the end, legislation will be required (and is appropriate) to address ongoing immigration, as well as Trump's intent to mass deport.

I believe Republicans can and should take the opportunity in 2025 to actually "reform" the immigration process. Unfortunately, they are not likely to include my proposal for a blanket moratorium on new immigrants over the next 10 years. But it seems certain they will provide tools and funding for the deportation of illegal immigrants.

It is also clear that the Trump administration will prioritize known criminals and terror risks. Their second priority will be those whose asylum status was rejected yet were allowed by Biden-Harris to remain in the country. They have also stated the intent to prioritize finding and safeguarding the hundreds of thousands of unaccompanied minors.

But mass deportation using draconian methods will be difficult at best, and the optics may even turn the majority against the concept. What we need is a kinder and gentler mass deportation. After all, we should acknowledge that the overwhelming majority of these folks came here simply to make a better life for themselves and their families. And many of them have a sense that they were essentially invited in.

What does a kinder and gentler deportation look like? I believe it includes an overwhelming amount of self-deportation and reform legislation could encourage this by including the following provisions.

Any new law should provide that those illegally entering the country are permanently disqualified from becoming citizens and forever banned from working in the United States. They would also be permanently ineligible for any government-sponsored benefit program. This may seem cruel to some, but the purpose is to dissuade forever those whose goal is to improve their lives from entering illegally. The only path to accomplish this should be the legal path. This should apply to new illegal immigrants from the date the legislation is approved.

For those who are already here illegally, there should be a method to encourage and even assist them in the self-deportation process and thereby get a pass on the permanent disqualification suggested above. To begin with, they should be given one year to register with DHS including providing their name, address and identifying details in the form of a driver's license-type photo and a DNA sample. (Note that the DNA results should be available to law enforcement to assist in solving crimes but should otherwise be private and used exclusively for immigration control purposes.) Significant funding would be necessary. Registration must be easy to do and could be set up at locations such as post offices or motor vehicle department sites. Staffing would be temporary because, after one year, the program would end. Any existing immigrants in the country illegally who wanted to protect their future citizenship or working privileges would have two choices. They must either register or self-deport within the year.

Those who registered and do not have asylum cases pending should have a total of two years (including the one-year registration period), to self-deport. Transportation assistance should be provided. For asylum cases, there must be a dramatic if temporary increase in funding to deal with backlogged claims, including government-funded legal advocates (similar to defense attorneys provided to accused criminals who cannot afford legal representation). The goal should be to clear all outstanding asylum cases within three years. And yes, I understand how difficult that could be.

Asylum rules would benefit from reform as well. Among other things, asylum seekers should be encouraged, and perhaps required, to apply while still outside the United States, including at the border as was done with Trump's "Remain in Mexico" rules.

There are many details between these lines, but a kinder and gentler deportation should be a Trump administration priority, especially in the form of new laws that encourage self-deportation and create disincentives to future illegal immigration.

FBI

From page 6

Chris Wray is No. 59 on the roster. Patel's enemies list is anyone who didn't lie down for Trump.

And that's just the executive branch, not including enemies in Congress or the press, but they exist also. Last December, on Steve Bannon's podcast, Patel said: "We will go out and find the conspirators, not just in government but in the media. Yes, we're going to come after the people in the media who lied about American citizens, who helped Joe Biden rig presidential elections—we're going to come after you."

Forget running the FBI, this guy Patel isn't suited for any job in government.

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Leave a legacy: What does that really mean?

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Del Benson is a photographer and through the years was involved in various entrepreneurial endeavors—photography, an English school, women's fitness center, real estate, and marketing. Check his work at https://www.delbenson.com/.

By DEL BENSON
Special to the Saipan Tribune

What is a true legacy? I believe it should be rooted in honor and integrity—not what you gain from your experiences, but what you genuinely give. Our children and grandchildren look to our legacy as a model of service, kindness, and consideration.

A meaningful legacy is about being more than just successful; it's about being a light that brings happiness to others. It's about being a builder—of friendships, families, and society—someone who can lift people up. A true legacy transcends personal achievements and focuses on positive impact. Whether you're running a company, serving in public office, parenting, or teaching, the question remains: What legacy do you want to leave behind?

Over the years, I've received powerful reminders about my father, Ariel Benson, whose life exemplified this principle. A photographer and teacher, he dedicated over 30 years to Utah's Sky View High School, where he established a renowned photography program that touched countless lives.

Dad's approach was distinctive. He was upbeat, playful, and always challenging students to become better people. His legacy wasn't about personal gain, but about giving. He gave love, joy, and attention—particularly to children. He understood the profound power of simply listening and acknowledging others. Often, all someone needs to feel lifted is a compassionate ear.

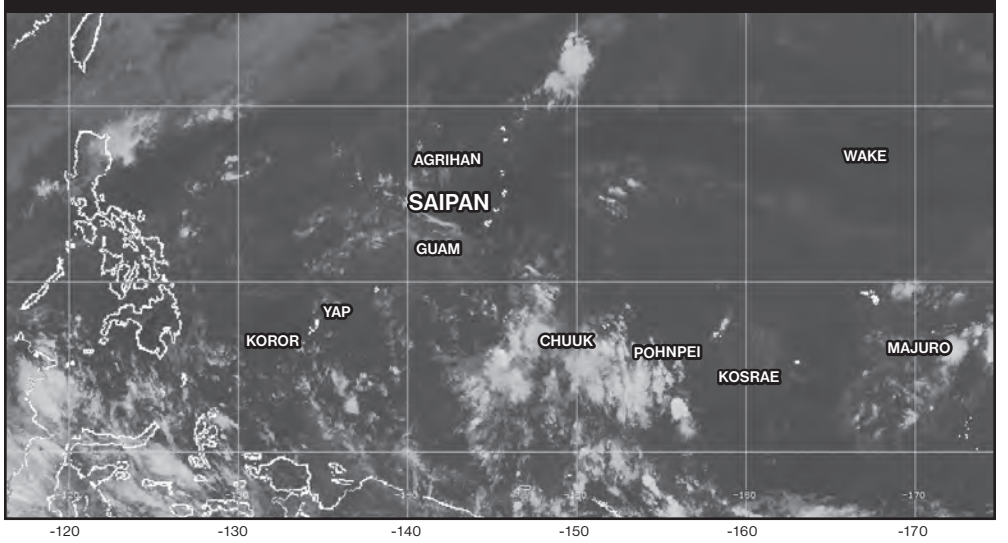
So I ask: What legacy do we want to create? What legacy can we help others build? If it lacks honor and integrity, it isn't truly a legacy.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. East winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of showers 50 percent.	Partly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of showers 20 percent.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
86° 77°	86° 78°	86° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 3:42 AM THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Minimal changes were made to the forecast overnight. Conditions will remain quiet across the Marianas for today and much of tonight, as a dry air mass works its way west across the region. CIMSS Mimic Layer Precipitable Water values fall below 1.3 inches just east of the islands, and latest satellite and radar show mostly clear skies with only a light stray shower or two in the area. Winds are gentle to occasionally moderate. Local buoys show combined seas of around 5 to 7 feet, but altimetry shows higher seas of around 6 to 8 feet east of the Marianas.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Fair	88° / 81°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Yap	Fair	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°
Majuro	Cloudy	85° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:30 AM	5:45 PM
Saturday	6:30 AM	5:46 PM
Sunday	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Monday	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Tuesday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	10:40 AM	10:17 PM	-
Saturday	11:24 AM	11:14 PM	-
Sunday	12:06 PM	-	-
Monday	-	12:09 AM	12:45 PM
Tuesday	-	1:04 AM	1:25 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°
Beijing	Fair	48° / 30°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74° / 67°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 71°
London	Showers	39° / 34°
Los Angeles	Sunny	82° / 51°
Manila	Fair	89° / 77°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	82° / 59°
Miami	Sunny	70° / 55°
New York	Rain	41° / 30°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	59° / 49°
Paris	Showers	43° / 34°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	50° / 43°
Rome	Rain	59° / 50°
Salem	Sunny	56° / 38°
San Francisco	Sunny	64° / 46°
Seoul	Sunny	46° / 25°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	64° / 49°
Washington, DC	Cloudy	45° / 28°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:47 AM	Low Tide	-0.47
12:29 PM	High Tide	1.70
5:54 PM	Low Tide	1.25
9:49 PM	High Tide	1.51

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	1:20PM	4:00PM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3218/2305	2:45AM	10:20PM	Daily via Incheon
UA076/183 Guam	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	2:30AM	6:25AM	Daily
7C3218	2:45AM	6:45AM	Daily from Dec 8
7C3212	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3552	3:55AM	7:20AM	3, 6 from Dec 25

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	3:05AM	5:55AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	5:30PM	10:05PM	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA156	00:40AM	6:25AM	3, 6
PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	10:55PM	4:40AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA156	00:40AM	8:45AM	3, 6 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3407	11:20PM	3:30PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3211	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	8:00PM	1:30AM+1	Daily
7C3217	8:10PM	1:40AM+1	Daily from Dec 8

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3551	9:25PM	2:50AM+1	2, 5 from Dec 25

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	6:25PM	1:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Energy Division to distribute solar-powered LED lights on Tinian

The Department of Public Works, Energy Division Office will be hosting its 2024 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Community Outreach Awareness Campaign and Distribution Program to distribute portable solar-powered LED lights on the island of Tinian.

The Energy Division, in conjunction with its Energy Education, Efficiency, and Conservation Program efforts, will be distributing one portable solar-powered LED light per residential household to assist residential consumers reduce the energy consumption and electricity costs of their homes and to educate the community about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation efforts in the CNMI.

The portable solar-powered LED lights will be available for distribution on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the specified time, while supplies last. The event will be a drive-thru distribution event and will be held thus Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Tinian Youth Center starting at 8:30am while supplies last.

Additionally, the Division of Energy would like to inform residents that receptacle adapters are available for distribution to those residents who obtained and availed of solar-powered table-top fans during the last Energy outreach drive-thru event on Nov. 8, 2024 at the Tinian Youth Center.

To avail of a portable solar-powered LED light, residential household consumers must present a copy of a valid government-issued identification card (ID) and a copy of a most recent utility bill with the name on the account. If consumers are renting, please provide a copy of the lease or rental agreement along with the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. utility bill. If the CUC account is under the landlord's name, a copy of the landlord's valid government-issued identification card (ID) must be provided. If the tenant is sub-metered, the sub-metered number must be provided along with the CUC utility bill/receipt of the utility bill and a copy of the account holder's valid government-issued identification card (ID).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The portable solar-powered LED light being distributed by the Department of Public Works' Energy Division Office.

If a residential homeowner with a CUC account holder's name is unable to participate in the event, a homeowner may designate an authorized person to obtain a portable solar-powered LED light on their behalf. However, an authorization letter must be issued by the homeowner designating a person authorized to obtain the portable solar-powered tabletop fan, along with a copy of a valid government-issued ID of the account holder and the designated person authorized. Businesses, rental property owners, and/or landlords are not eligible to receive the portable solar-powered LED light.

Additionally, please be sure to follow posted traffic flow signs as instructed. Operators and passengers of motor vehicles must remain in their vehicles at all times. The Division of Energy respectfully requests the cooperation and understanding of the community to strictly observe the following notice:

- Walk-ins are strictly not allowed and individuals will be turned away.
- Division of Energy reserves the right to refuse any services to any or all persons during the event and or reserves the right to make any changes, modifications, revisions, etc., and or to cancel any portion of the program services or event, in part or as a whole, without any prior notification.

For additional questions or information regarding this event, you may contact Mardee-Ann Hermosilla, administrative officer; or Daniel Taitano, program coordinator at (670) 664-4480/2.

Funding opportunity for this project is made possible through federal grant funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy, State Energy Program-Bi-Partisan Infrastructure law (SEP-BIL). ***(PR)***

UFO thanks sponsors of this Sunday's Paskong Pinoy 2024

IT&E CNMI, RNV Construction and its affiliates Homesmart Residences and Best Deal Merchandises, Hong Ye Construction, and Marianas Business Plaza are the major sponsors of this coming Sunday's UFO Paskong Pinoy 2024.

United Filipino Organization-CNMI would also like to thank the following for their support: KL Carr Enterprises, Lito and Malou Mendoza, Geoffrey Melchor, Judy Mendieta, MarPac Inc., Kalayaan Inc., Hwang Jae Corp., Dave Electronics, Cepeda Rentals, Artman Trash, Crowne Plaza Resort, Saipan Shipping, Century Hotel, Triple J Saipan, Aliana's Fashion and Trends, JTM Snack Bar, Core Plus Construction, Mildred Ebuen, George Medina of 6JMS Sports Bar & Grill, Shirley's Coffee Shop, Marie Javier of SM, Marcelo Masilungan of SuperTech, Valentino Cruz of Macro Accounting Services, Saipan Nail Spa, McDonald's of Saipan, Coca-Cola Beverages-Micronesia, Saipan Ice & Water Company, WM Engineering Services, Hector Sevilla of HTS Construction, and Bong Malasarte of Armatech.

The "Paskong Pinoy 2024" will be held at the Marianas Business Plaza parking grounds in Susupe this Sunday, Dec. 8, from 11am to 7pm. With this event, the United Filipino Organization aims to uplift the spirit of Christmas by providing a whole day of fun-filled activities that highlight the traditional Christmas celebration.

The annual Paskong Pinoy celebration is a whole day of Christmas festivities open to members of the CNMI community. The event will have simultaneous programs, presentations, entertainment, gift-giving, games, and raffle drawings. Local vendors will also sell food and non-food items.

Christmas melodies will be played throughout the event for all guests to enjoy.

During the event, UFO will hold an on-the-spot Christmas tree making contest, with prizes of $200, $150, and $100 for first, second, and third place winners, respectively.

There will also be an on-the-spot drawing contest for kids ages 5-8, with cash prizes of $30, $20, and $10 for first, second, and third place winners, respectively.

Registration will be at the event grounds.

UFO is selling $1 raffle tickets with a $300 first prize, $200 second prize, and $100 third prize, and a lot of consolation prizes at stake.

The highlight of the Paskong Pinoy event is "Kwarta o Kahon" with a grand prize of $500 cash.

If you wish to be one of the sponsors, call or WhatsApp UFO president Birhen Martinez at (670) 483-0915, secretary Yho Villavicencio at (670) 285-9017, treasurer Noel Ordas at (670) 287-0327, and PRO Annamae Adaza at (670) 285-4388. For more details, follow the UFO Facebook: United Filipino Organization-CNMI. ***(PR)***

NOTICE OF CLOSURE
CGD EASY CASH PAWNSHOP

PLEASE BE INFORMED that effective February 15, 2025, our business operations with cease. Please visit our location so we can assist you with your pawned items.

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Website: www.cnmiports.com

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
RUNWAY REHABILITATION REPACKAGING PROJECT
PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-004-20 (AIP PENDING)

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT FACILITATOR

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is seeking statements of qualifications from qualified and experienced firms (individually or collectively) to provide professional consulting services for Safety Risk Management (SRM) facilitation support, in conjunction with the upcoming Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Runway Rehabilitation Repackaging Project, No. CPA-SA-004-20 (AIP pending).

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater, CPA's CIP Administrator, at wprater@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater via the email address above or may be hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, Friday, December 13, 2024.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2024.** It is preferable that statements of qualification be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ LEO B. TUDELA
Executive Director

Date: November 15, 2024

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-012-24-(REPACKAGED)

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 27, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING NOVEMBER 27, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-012-24-REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR **BEFORE 2:00 P.M,. DECEMBER 27, 2024, A 10% BID BOND OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS,** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

FREDERICK PANGELINAN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB25-BECQ/DLNR-42500016

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 27, 2024 TIME: 9:00 A.M.

"Purchase of One (1) Agricultural Tractor and Three (3) Attachments: One (1) Mower, One (1) Front bucket, and One (1) Hitch Compatible w/ Tractor for DLNR – Parks & Recreation, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR ACCESS PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG. NO. 12386 ASCENSION DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO MR. JUSTIN PANGELINAN, CLEAN AIR PROGRAM MANAGER AT justin.pangelinan@becq.gov.mp BY DECEMBER 13, 2024, AT 4:00 P.M.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
BECQ ADMINISTRATOR

/S/ GERALDINE T. CRUZ
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

Business

Bitcoin tops $100K as big rally sparked by Trump election win rolls on

NEW YORK (AP)—Bitcoin has topped the $100,000 mark as a massive rally in the world's most popular cryptocurrency sparked by the election of Donald Trump rolls on.

The milestone comes just hours after the President-elect signaled a lighter regulatory approach to the crypto industry when he said he intends to nominate cryptocurrency advocate Paul Atkins to be the next chair the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Bitcoin has soared to unprecedented heights since Trump won the election Nov. 5. The cryptocurrency has climbed dramatically from $69,374 on Election Day and rose as high as $103,713 Wednesday, according to CoinDesk. Just two years ago, bitcoin dropped below $17,000 following the collapse of crypto exchange FTX.

How long bitcoin will stay above the $100,000 mark is uncertain. As with everything in the volatile cryptoverse, the future is impossible to predict. And while some are bullish on future gains, other experts continue to warn of investment risks.

Here's what you need to know.

Back up. What is cryptocurrency again?

Cryptocurrency has been around for a while now. But, chances are, you've heard about it more and more over the last few years.

In basic terms, cryptocurrency is digital money. This kind of currency is designed to work through an online network without a central authority—meaning it's typically not backed by any government or banking institution—and transactions get recorded with technology called a blockchain.

Bitcoin is the largest and oldest cryptocurrency, although other assets like ethereum, tether and dogecoin have also gained popularity over the years. Some investors see cryptocurrency as a "digital alternative" to traditional money, but the large majority of daily financial transactions are still conducted using fiat currencies such as the dollar. Also, bitcoin can be very volatile, with its price reliant on larger market conditions.

Why is bitcoin soaring?

A lot of the recent action has to do with the outcome of the U.S. presidential election.

Trump, who was once a crypto skeptic, has pledged to make the U.S. "the crypto capital of the planet" and create a "strategic reserve" of bitcoin. His campaign accepted donations in cryptocurrency and he courted fans at a bitcoin conference in July. He also launched World Liberty Financial, a new venture with family members to trade cryptocurrencies.

AP

Republican presidential candidate former President Donald Trump speaks at the Bitcoin 2024 Conference Saturday, July 27, 2024, in Nashville, Tenn.

Crypto industry players have welcomed Trump's victory, in hopes that he would be able to push through legislative and regulatory changes that they've long lobbied for—which, generally speaking, aim for an increased sense of legitimacy without too much red tape.

Trump made a move in that direction Wednesday when he said he intends to nominate Paul Atkins to chair the Securities and Exchange Commission. Atkins was an SEC commissioner during the presidency of George W. Bush. In the years since leaving the agency, Atkins has made the case against too much market regulation. He joined the Token Alliance, a cryptocurrency advocacy organization, in 2017.

Under current chair Gary Gensler, the SEC has cracked down on the crypto industry, penalizing a number of companies for violating securities laws. But he's also faced criticism from industry players in the process, like the chief legal officer of Robinhood, who described Gensler's approach toward crypto as "rigid" and "hostile." Gensler will step down when Trump takes office.

One crypto-friendly move the SEC did make under Gensler was the approval in January of spot bitcoin ETFs, or exchange trade funds, which allow investors to have a stake in bitcoin without directly buying it. The Spot ETFs were the dominant driver of bitcoin's price before the election — but, like much of the crypto's recent momentum, saw record inflows postelection.

What are the risks?

History shows you can lose money in crypto as quickly as you've made it. Long-term price behavior relies on larger market conditions. Trading continues at all hours, every day.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, bitcoin stood at just over $5,000. Its price climbed to nearly $69,000 by November 2021, during high demand for technology assets, but later crashed during an aggressive series of rate hikes by the Federal Reserve. And the late-2022 collapse of FTX significantly undermined confidence in crypto overall, with bitcoin falling below $17,000.

Investors began returning in large numbers as inflation started to cool — and gains skyrocketed on the anticipation and then early success of spot ETFs. But experts still stress caution, especially for small-pocketed investors. And lighter regulation from the coming Trump administration could mean less guardrails.

"I would say, keep it simple. And don't take on more risk than you can afford to," said Adam Morgan McCarthy, a research analyst at Kaiko, adding that there isn't a "magic eight ball" to know for certain what comes next.

What about the climate impact?

Assets like bitcoin are produced through a process called "mining," which consumes a lot of energy. Operations relying on pollutive sources have drawn particular concern over the years.

Recent research published by the United Nations University and Earth's Future journal found that the carbon footprint of 2020-2021 bitcoin mining across 76 nations was equivalent to the emissions from burning 84 billion pounds of coal or running 190 natural gas-fired power plants. Coal satisfied the bulk of bitcoin's electricity demands (45%), followed by natural gas (21%) and hydropower (16%).

Environmental impacts of bitcoin mining boil largely down to the energy source used. Industry analysts have maintained that clean energy has increased in use in recent years, coinciding with rising calls for climate protections.

Small business owners brace for Trump's proposed tariffs

Small businesses are bracing for stiff tariffs that President-elect Donald Trump has proposed as one of his first actions when he takes office.

Trump has proposed importers pay a 25% tax on all products entering the country from Canada and Mexico, and an additional 10% tariff on goods from China, as one of his first executive orders. He previously floated a tariff of up to 20% on everything else the United States imports.

This means small businesses may end up paying more for goods and services. Small business owners say they're waiting to see what final form the tariffs take, but are bracing for higher costs that they may in turn need to pass on to consumers.

Laurel Orley, cofounder and CEO of Nashville-based sprouted nut snack company Daily Crunch, said at first she didn't think the tariffs would affect her business, because she doesn't import very much. But she realized the tariffs will have a ripple effect. For example, she had planned on sourcing bags from China to save 5 cents a bag. But with the tariffs, she might need to scuttle that plan.

"That was one of our big initiatives for 2025, moving all our bags to China for 15 cents a bag," she said. "And now I don't know if we can save any money on the bags when the tariffs go into effect."

Warehouse prices are going up because of the expected tariffs, too, Orley said. Her warehouse provider said demand has been increasing since the tariffs were announced.

"As many other companies are buying bulk inventory overseas to get ahead of tariffs, warehouse availability is becoming limited, which will increase costs for everyone," she said.

So, Orley is trying to lock in her warehouse contract for 2025 and find a third-party logistics provider for the year, "to get ahead of what's to come and pre-planning as much as we can," she said.

Across the border in Canada, Julie Bednarski-Malik runs another snack company, Healthy Crunch, based in Mississauga, Ontario, that specializes in foods that are free of the top 11 major food allergens like peanut, tree nut and dairy as well as low in sugar.

She sells her products in both Canadian and U.S. retail stores, and said tariffs will affect consumers on both sides.

"If you have a severe anaphylactic reaction to some type of dairy or soy and you can't find a product in the U.S. because we're the only ones that make it, it's going to be a lot more expensive for U.S. consumers," Bednarski-Malik said. "So I think these tariffs are really not only going to be penalizing, you know, other countries such as Canada, but also U.S. consumers."

She's holding off on making any major changes in her business until the tariffs are finalized, but expects to see higher prices.

"Ultimately, the consumer is going to have to pay at the end of the day because our margins are so tight beginning with our food prices, (which) have been increasing dramatically over the last few years," she said. "So there's not much margin left to keep the same price and maintain that price while incurring a 25% extra tariff on our product." ***(PR)***

Bruton- Adams joins APAFS board of governors

HAGATNA, Guam—The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies is pleased to announce that Mae Bruton-Adams, executive director of Micronesian Conservation Trust, has joined the APAFS board of governors. She will assume the position vacated by William Kostka, former executive director of MCT.

Bruton- Adams

Bruton-Adams is the founder and former managing director of APLŸS Consulting, an environmental consulting firm focused on sustainable development and climate resilience. She is also the founder of the *Kaselehlie Press*, the longest-running newspaper in the Federated States of Micronesia. Since 2003, she has served as the French honorary consul to the FSM.

Bruton-Adams has nearly two decades of experience in conservation management and government relations through her work with the FSM Mission to the United Nations, The Nature Conservancy, and the French honorary consul to the FSM.

Earlier in her career, Bruton-Adams worked in investment banking with the Unit Investment Trust department at Reich and Tang in New York, blending financial expertise with her passion for environmental advocacy.

Bruton-Adams is also actively involved in promoting health and fitness as the president of the FSM Swimming Association and the founder of the Micronesia Fitness Club. A lifelong sports enthusiast, she played tennis and ran track during her school years. Since joining CrossFit Kona in 2019, she has continued to stay active with CrossFit workouts in Pohnpei. Her hobbies include tennis, hiking, and writing poems and short stories.

Bruton-Adams was born in Texas and raised on the island of Chuuk. She is married and a proud mother of four children.

APAFS (www.apafs.org) is a Guam-based 501c3 association whose membership includes institutional investment funds throughout the Pacific Region. Its mission is to promote prudent stewardship and leadership through fiduciary education and to lead advocacy efforts on behalf of its membership. The organization recently celebrated its 22th anniversary. Annually, APAFS hosts a week-long educational conference in Manila. Notable keynote speakers have included, Fareed Zakaria (CNN host and commentator), Mark Mobius (former executive chairman of Templeton), and Marc Faber (author and Swiss investor living in Thailand). ***(PR)***

Life & Style

The best movies of 2024 as ranked by AP film writers

As much as theaters are humming right now, with "Wicked" and "Moana 2" bringing moviegoers by the droves, it's been a fairly bruising movie year.

In between the blockbusters, though, the challenge of not just capturing the attention of audiences but of simply getting to the screen feels more perilous than ever. The year was marked by filmmakers who wagered everything from a $120 million pile (Francis Ford Coppola's "Megalopolis") to their life (the dissident Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof's "The Seed of the Sacred Fig").

JAKE COYLE'S TOP MOVIES OF 2024

1. "All We Imagine As Light"

Was this a great year for movies? The consensus seems to be no, and that may be true. But it did produce some stone-cold masterpieces, none more so than Payal Kapadia's sublime tale of three women in modern Mumbai. It's a grittily real movie graced, in equally parts, by keen-eyed documentary and dreamy poetry. Beguilingly, "All We Imagine As Light" grows more profound as it cleaves further from reality. In theaters.

2. "Nickel Boys"

Like Kapadia, RaMell Ross started out in documentary before bringing a singular eye to narrative film. His adaptation of Colson Whitehead's Pulitzer Prize–winning novel, about two Black teenagers at an abusive reform school in the Jim Crow South, is shot mostly from the two boys' first-person perspective. The result is one of the most visually inventive American films of the decade and, just as certainly, one of the richest in empathy. Opens in theaters Dec. 13.

3. "Anora"

So many of the reasons to go to the movies—to laugh at a clattering comic set piece, to witness the breakthrough of a young performer, to be devastated by something tragic—are contained within the thrillingly kitchen-sink "Anora." It's a concoction that only Sean Baker could conceive, let alone execute. (And, by the way, if you liked Yura Borisov's performance alongside Mikey Madison, seek out 2021's "Compartment No. 6.") In theaters.

4. "I Saw the TV Glow"

Jane Schoenbrun's sophomore feature—a dramatic leap forward for filmmaker and a transfixing trans parable—is a chilling 1990s coming of age in which a "Buffy the Vampire Slayer"-like series called "The Pink Opaque" offers a possible portal out of drab suburban life and other suffocations. It feels chillingly, beautifully ripped out of Schoenbrun's soul—and it's got a killer soundtrack. Streaming on Max, available for digital rental.

5. "Green Border"

The fury of Agnieszka Holland's searing migrant drama is suitably calibrated to the crisis. Along the Poland-Belarus border, a small band of migrants from Syria and Afghanistan are sent back and forth across a wooded borderland—sometimes they're even literally tossed—in a grim game of "not in my backyard." It's not an easy movie to watch, nor should it be. To keep up with the times, more uncomfortable movies like this may be needed. Streaming on Kino Film Collection, available for digital rental.

6. "The Fall Guy"

We also need more big, fun movies with Ryan Gosling. David Leitch's affectionate ode to stunt performers manages to celebrate behind-the-scenes crew members while simultaneously being completely carried by two of our most winning movie stars in Gosling and Emily Blunt. The societal value of watching Gosling cry to Taylor Swift's "All Too Well" should not be underestimated. Streaming on Peacock, available for digital rental.

7. "The Seed of the Sacred Fig"

The way the Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof, who was forced into exile while editing this, condenses real-life social upheaval into a family drama makes this a uniquely disquieting film. Like Kurosawa's "Stray Dog," Rasoulof's movie centers around a lost handgun. The subsequent search reveals just how deeply the Iranian government's policies have seeped into the most intimate relationships. In theaters.

8. "Ghostlight" and "Sing Sing"

We had not one but two movies this year that captured the therapeutic properties of theater. Each, almost unbelievably, deftly eludes tipping into cliche thanks to abiding compassion and authenticity in the performances. Alex Thompson and Kelly O'Sullivan's "Ghostlight" is about a grieving father, a construction worker (an exceptional Keith Kupferer), who reluctantly joins a local production of "Romeo and Juliet." "Sing Sing" dramatizes a real rehabilitation prison program. Its screening at Sing Sing Correctional, where many of its performers were once incarcerated, was easily the most moving moviegoing experience of the year for me. "Ghostlight" is available for digital rental. "Sing Sing" returns to theaters Jan. 17.

9. "His Three Daughters"

In Azazel Jacobs' funny, tender and raw family drama, a flawless cast of Carrie Coon, Elizabeth Olsen and Natasha Lyonne play three sisters caring for their dying father. In close quarters and with death looming, it all comes out. Streaming on Netflix.

10. "Made in England: The Films of Powell and Pressburger"

In between large, lengthy epics, Martin Scorsese has made some his most interesting and personal films. In this, Scorsese narrates for director David Hinton his lifetime journey with the films of Powell and Pressburger, the great filmmakers of "The Red Shoes," "I Know Where I'm Going!" and "Black Narcissus." As an expression of movie love—of the power of film to transfix you, to change your life, to live alongside you as you grow older—"Made in England" could hardly be more effusive. Such insightful, passionate testimonies are an increasingly necessary lifeblood in a film culture where algorithms are typically blind to the treasures of cinema's past. Streaming on WatchTCM and available for digital rental.

Also: "Grand Tour," "Ernest Cole: Lost and Found,""No Other Land,""Rebel Ridge,""The Brutalist,""Between the Temples,""Evil Does Not Exist," "Universal Language," "Daughters"

LINDSEY BAHR'S TOP MOVIES OF 2024

1. "Blitz"

Steve McQueen tells a different kind of World War II story in "Blitz," a powerful and clear-eyed odyssey through London during the German bombing raid. Structured around a 9-year-old boy (Elliott Heffernan) trying to make his way back to his mother (Saoirse Ronan), it is a sneakily revolutionary glimpse into and poignant elegy for worlds unexplored and stories untold. Streaming on Apple TV+.

2. "All We Imagine as Light"

Poetic and transportive, Kapadia's Mumbai-set film explores the vibrations of a thrilling but brutally impersonal metropolis, the lives of three women in different stages and predicaments (forbidden love, loneliness, eviction) and delicacy of female friendships.

3. "Thelma"

Josh Margolin's debut feature about a 90-something (played by the incomparable June Squibb) on a mission to get $10,000 back from a scammer is so modest in scope and effortlessly enjoyable that it's easy to undervalue. This independent film feels as sharp and put-together as a yesteryear studio comedy. It's pure joy and one of those movies you could recommend to anyone. Streaming on Hulu.

4. "Anora"

It takes a special kind of movie to transcend the echo chamber of arthouse cinephelia and become a cultural moment, but Baker's "Anora" did it. A classic in waiting, Baker and his star Mikey Madison, who lifts the streetwise stripper trope, take audiences on an unforgettable ride in this fairy tale that falls apart in spectacular fashion.

5. "Nickel Boys"

Ross transforms Whitehead's Pulitzer-winning novel about the abuses and generational trauma of a reform school in the Jim Crow South for the screen by employing first-person point-of-view. It's a bold choice that pays off, transporting you into the heartbreaking reality of Elwood and Turner, two characters you won't soon forget.

6. "Dune: Part Two"

Decades of dreaming about a film does not always seem to benefit said film, but Denis Villeneuve was able to translate his passion for Frank Herbert's opus into pure cinematic spectacle, and doom, about the rise of a leader. It's a grand and thrilling adventure that could make sci-fi nerds out of us all. Streaming on MAX.

7. "A Real Pain"

Jesse Eisenberg grapples with modern and historical trauma in the disarmingly entertaining road trip film "A Real Pain," which he wrote, directed and stars in alongside Kieran Culkin as cousins on a Holocaust tour in Poland. In theaters.

8. "The Outrun"

Saoirse Ronan delivered one of the year's absolute best performances as an alcoholic who goes further and further into seclusion in the Orkney Islands in an attempt to start life anew. Films about addiction are hardly novel, and yet Nora Fingscheidt captures the wild highs, lows and in-betweens of the human condition with unapologetic honesty. Available for digital rental.

9. "Evil Does Not Exist"

Ryûsuke Hamaguchi's follow-up to "Drive My Car" takes us to a small mountain village in Japan, where residents are hesitant to welcome a big city company with plans to set up a glamping site. It's a slow-burn kind of experience, with community debates about mountain streams and septic tanks that might not sound terribly exciting and yet it's one of the year's most haunting and effective. Streaming on Criterion Channel, available for digital rental.

10. "Good One"

It was a great year for first-time directors, including India Donaldson whose quietly brilliant character study of a teenage girl on a camping trip with her dad and his friend resonates even a year later. Streaming on Apple TV+ ***(AP)***

Ex-wife inserts herself into man's budding romance

DEAR ABBY: I need advice about a new relationship. I am a 60-year-old man. I divorced last year and met a nice woman named "Eileen" shortly afterward, and things seemed to be going well. When my ex found out I was seeing Eileen (they didn't know each other) she decided to call Eileen and try to cause issues by saying many things that are not true. She succeeded.

I tried to save my marriage but was unsuccessful and was trying to move on and be happy again. There was no abuse or anything like that, but my ex said I didn't fulfill her needs well enough, so she moved on. I now feel Eileen doesn't fully trust me even though she still sees me.

I want to have an open and honest relationship because I care for Eileen enough that someday in the future, I may want to make her my wife. How can I earn back the trust that was lost and get our relationship back on track? Things have definitely taken a big step backward, and I'm disappointed and saddened.

NERVOUS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEAR NERVOUS: You have done nothing wrong and shouldn't need to "earn back" Eileen's trust. Have a face-to-face talk with Eileen. Tell her you care very much about her, but since your bitter ex-wife felt the need to have a woman-to-woman chat with her, you sense things may have changed between you. Ask if that's true, and if it is, ask why. She needs to hear your side of the story to counteract what your ex said. However, if, indeed, she no longer trusts you, you may need to find another lady friend.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating the most wonderful man I have ever met for more than a year, and we are planning to get married. One of the things we have bonded over is that we both want a multigenerational household. My boyfriend's parents (who are in their 70s) have been living with him for the past two years, and this will continue for the foreseeable future.

As our wedding grows closer, I'm feeling increasingly anxious about the logistics of living with his parents. I like having minimal possessions, while they are borderline hoarders. My boyfriend knows I'm anxious about it and is willing to talk about the situation, but he also takes the position that he and his family are a package deal. I love him, but I don't think I can sign up for 20 years of a cluttered house. What should I do?

CONCERNED ABOUT CLUTTER

DEAR CONCERNED: I'm glad your boyfriend is willing to talk about it, but what is he willing to DO about it? Your (and his parents') lifestyles are very different. They feel most secure having all of their possessions around. At their ages, they are not likely to change.

The place to have a truth session would be in the office of a licensed family counselor to see if this can be mediated. But frankly, because they are a package deal, as all multigenerational households are, you might be better off finding someone to marry other than the three of them.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

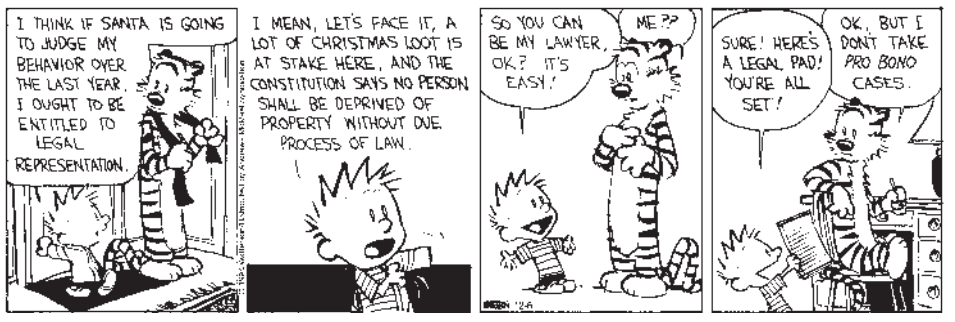
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I THINK IF SANTA IS GOING TO JUDGE MY BEHAVIOR OVER THE LAST YEAR, I OUGHT TO BE ENTITLED TO LEGAL REPRESENTATION.
I MEAN, LET'S FACE IT, A LOT OF CHRISTMAS LOOT IS AT STAKE HERE, AND THE CONSTITUTION SAYS NO PERSON SHALL BE DEPRIVED OF PROPERTY WITHOUT DUE PROCESS OF LAW.
SO YOU CAN BE MY LAWYER, OK.? IT'S EASY!
ME??
SURE! HERE'S A LEGAL PAD! YOU'RE ALL SET!
OK., BUT I DON'T TAKE PRO BONO CASES.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I'VE INTERROGATED THE ENTIRE FAMILY.
YES, YOU HAVE.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE THAT SQUIRREL DECORATION IS.
THIS CASE IS GONNA HAUNT ME FOR YEARS.
I'M TOO YOUNG TO BE GRIZZLED!
HAVE YOU BEEN WATCHING THE DETECTIVE CHANNEL WITH DAD AGAIN?
BARRELL

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

ARE YOU READY TO SWEAT?
HOW MUCH SWEAT ARE WE TALKING?
TRAINER
WELL, TO GET IN REALLY GOOD SHAPE FROM HOW YOU LOOK NOW, I'D SAY YOU NEED TO BURN ABOUT 80,000 CALORIES.
WHAT CAN I GET FOR JUST WARMING UP 20 CALORIES TO ROOM TEMPERATURE?
TRAINER

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

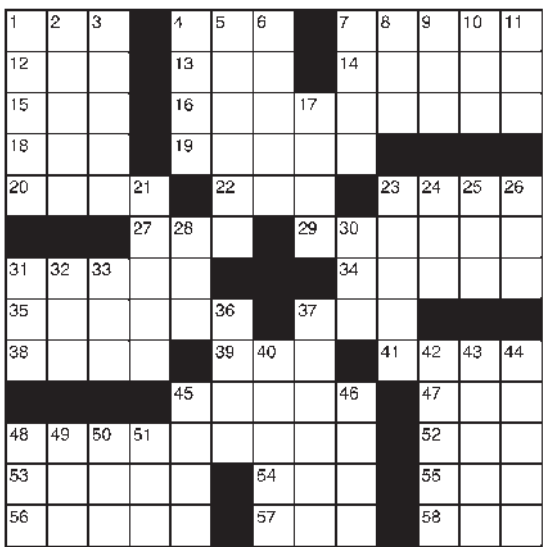
ACROSS
1 Lawyers' org.
4 Free (of)
7 On the — (busted)
12 Saloon
13 Bio stat
14 Singer Mann
15 Recede
16 Hawaiian crop
18 Ring decision
19 Quiet partner?
20 Draped garment
22 Old map letters
23 Harbor arrival
27 Vegas opener?
29 Gas rating number
31 Iberian nation
34 Cosmopolitan ingredient
35 Suave
37 Family
38 Monopoly card
39 "The Bells" author
41 Dutch cheese
45 Amazon, for one
47 Rock producer Brian
48 Minty holiday treat
52 Dogpatch adjective
53 Puccini work
54 Heavy weight
55 Old Ford model
56 Gussy up
57 Conclude
58 Utter

DOWN
1 Helps a hood
2 Eastern European cake
3 Viny shelter
4 Grate
5 "Reckon so"
6 French painter Edgar
7 Cab cost
8 Rock's Ocasek
9 "— Little Teapot"
10 Sawbuck
11 Wye follower
17 Height (Pref.)
21 Homer classic
23 Rock
24 Possessed
25 Pen filler
26 Pot pie morsel
28 Writer Beattie
30 106, in old Rome
31 South of France?
32 Opposite of "post-"
33 Honest politician
36 Grand tale
37 Excited about
40 Egg-shaped
42 Valleys
43 "Rapture" singer Baker
44 Like stale bread
45 "Wheel of Fortune" host Seacrest
46 Tear
48 Police officer
49 Earth Day mo.
50 Born as
51 Dr. of hip-hop

Solution time: 25 mins.

A	A	H	■	R	I	G	A	■	S	G	T	S
S	N	O	■	A	M	A	L	■	E	L	A	L
H	O	L	D	F	A	S	T	■	N	O	R	A
■	■	D	O	A	■	P	A	G	E	B	O	Y
S	C	O	N	E	S	■	R	U	G	■	■	■
U	R	N	■	L	I	Z	■	S	A	F	E	S
N	A	I	O	■	B	I	B	■	L	O	G	O
S	T	O	U	T	■	P	A	D	■	O	A	R
■	■	■	I	M	S	■	S	U	B	I	L	E
J	U	I	C	I	E	R	■	N	A	H	■	■
A	G	R	A	■	W	I	I	H	H	O	L	D
I	L	K	S	■	E	L	S	A	■	L	O	N
L	I	S	I	■	H	E	A	M	■	D	U	A

Yesterday's answer 12-6



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lindsay Price, 48; Judd Apatow, 57; Tom Hulce, 71; JoBeth Williams, 76.

Happy Birthday: Moderation and simplicity are your best path forward. Honesty and integrity will keep you out of harm's way. Concentrate on taking positive action, living by the rules and regulations, and budgeting to ensure you reach your goals and the lifestyle you desire. A career change or long-term investment will help you to raise your financial profile and to put your mind at ease. Make diet and exercise mainstays. Your numbers are 7, 13, 21, 29, 32, 38, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take a second look or get the opinion of someone you trust. The information you gather will offer insight and confidence to push forward with your plans. Changing your environment, decor or routine will impact how you think and encourage you to follow your heart. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Make personal gain and physical improvements your goals. Put your energy into making your space inviting and comfortable. An unusual offer will give you a reason to rethink your direction. Don't limit your achievements because you lack confidence or let laziness prevail. Make health and love priorities. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Refrain from making an impulsive decision. Set your radar on alert and be wary of inconsistencies. Decline an invitation asking you to participate or give more than you can afford. Invest in yourself and personal growth and update your skills and qualifications. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Get on the fast track and finish what you start. The sooner you put your work behind you, the more fun you can have. A social event, networking or exploring a creative pursuit will attract your interest, but before you get too excited, check out the offer's validity. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Choose your venues carefully. Refuse to let anyone talk you into something that isn't worthwhile or that is overpriced. Research is your ally and will help protect you from scammers. Stick to who and what you know and trust, and socialize within your means. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take control and refuse to let anyone limit your achievements. It may be challenging to say no to someone you love, but it is necessary if what you're being asked will hinder your reputation. Look for incentives and alternative ways to accommodate others without personal consequences. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Travel, research and shop for unique gifts for loved ones. Visit old friends and catch up on gossip, but refrain from paying for someone else's mistake or getting involved in their drama. A reunion will bring back fond memories and encourage you to revisit your dreams, hopes and wishes. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov- Nov 21):* Keep your emotions safely tucked away. Refuse to let anyone needle you into an argument or pressure you to make inappropriate changes. Concentrate on domestic issues, home improvements or preparing for the festive season. Discuss plans with someone special. Choose peace and love over discord. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Play for keeps and enjoy the ride. Take pride in your work and put your energy where it promises the highest return. Refuse to let anyone take advantage of you or fold under pressure to participate in something that doesn't matter to you. Trust your instincts. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Look for solid offers at a decent price. Be quick to take a pass if something doesn't feel right. Secure your financial position and spend only on necessities. You can't buy love or give in to someone's power of persuasion. A change of heart is apparent. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Sit tight, wait, watch and see what unfolds. If you refuse to let your emotions tangle in someone else's dilemma, you can dodge a mishap. Let your intelligence lead the way and offer suggestions instead of your money or reputation. A change of scenery will lift your spirits. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* When uncertainty sets in, you should take a break and address personal issues. Look at your financial status and the changes you can make to lower your overhead. Taking control of your position and prospects will make your life easier and give you a reason to celebrate. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are thoughtful, astute and optimistic. You are dynamic and sporty.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

6	3		2				1	
							9	
8					1	4	6	
		1			5		8	2
						6		
2						9	4	
	6			5				
	7	3	6				2	
5		9		1				

Difficulty: ★★★★ 12/6

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	7	9	8	4	2	1	5	3
4	8	5	3	1	7	2	6	9
1	3	2	9	5	6	4	8	7
8	1	7	4	9	5	3	2	6
3	9	4	6	2	1	5	7	8
5	2	6	7	8	3	9	4	1
7	4	8	5	3	9	6	1	2
9	5	1	2	6	8	7	3	4
2	6	3	1	7	4	8	9	5

Difficulty: ★★★ 12/5

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

RULES ARE RULES Solution: 7 letters

Y	M	R	I	N	F	L	U	E	N	C	E	S	S	S
L	O	F	E	T	A	A	L	A	U	T	C	N	U	P
N	O	L	O	D	R	I	A	F	H	O	O	P	R	E
S	R	R	P	C	R	C	T	I	U	I	E	I	V	T
H	S	E	T	M	U	O	C	R	T	R	N	A	E	R
A	S	E	V	N	E	S	T	A	V	C	H	A	I	A
R	A	R	R	O	O	S	T	I	I	E	C	M	L	F
E	L	T	E	D	G	C	S	P	B	H	O	A	L	F
T	C	I	A	W	E	I	L	E	E	L	D	N	A	I
A	O	M	D	P	O	E	S	R	A	N	E	U	N	C
L	N	R	X	N	U	P	K	R	T	T	A	A	C	P
U	D	E	S	U	O	H	Ⓞ	Ⓑ	Ⓔ	Ⓨ	B	L	E	L
G	U	P	H	T	A	M	O	T	S	U	C	E	T	A
E	C	I	L	O	P	E	B	S	C	H	O	O	L	Y
R	T	C	E	P	S	E	R	S	T	U	D	E	N	T

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Behave, Books, Classroom, Code, Conduct, Control, Courts, Custom, Dress, Employ, Ethics, Expectation, Fair, Focus, Govern, House, Influence, Manual, Math, Moral, Obey, Order, Penalty, Permit, Play, Police, Power, Principle, Punctual, Read, Regulate, Respect, School, Seat Belt, Share, Social, Student, Supervision, Surveillance, Teacher, Traffic

Yesterday's Answer: Lone Star

For WONDERWORD apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367. Order now in time for the holidays!

Heat set assists record in blowout win over Lakers

MIAMI (AP)—Tyler Herro scored 21 of his 31 points in the third quarter and the Miami Heat set a franchise record for assists in beating the Los Angeles Lakers 134-93 on Wednesday night.

The Heat had 42 assists, one more than the previous mark of 41 against Portland on March 29. They tied another franchise record with 24 3-pointers, and the 41-point margin of victory was the third-biggest in team history.

Jimmy Butler scored 17 points and Bam Adebayo had 14 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists for the Heat.

LeBron James scored 29 points for the Lakers, who have lost six of eight—their last two by a combined 70 points. Rui Hachimura added 14 for the Lakers.

James made 12 of 18 shots, snapping a six-game streak of him shooting less than 50%. The last time he had such a streak exceeding six games was his rookie season, 2003-04 (he has streaks of eight and 12 games of shooting below 50% that year).

Miami led by as many as 43 points, by far its biggest lead of the season. The Heat led Washington by 24 points on Nov. 2.

More history for James—his 3-pointer with 8:55 left in the third quarter was the 2,451st of his career, breaking a tie with Kyle Korver for No. 7 all-time.

Herro had seven 3-pointers in the third quarter, tying the Heat record for any quarter. Duncan Robinson had seven in a second quarter against Cleveland on Nov. 20, 2019. The previous Heat record for a third quarter was six, by now-Lakers guard Gabe Vincent on Jan. 28, 2022.

The Lakers close their four-game trip Friday in Atlanta. The Heat host Phoenix on Saturday, the second game of a four-game homestand.

AP

Miami Heat guard Tyler Herro (14) is congratulated by his teammates after scoring during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Los Angeles Lakers, Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024, in Miami.

CELTICS 130, PISTONS 120

BOSTON (AP)—Jaylen Brown had 28 points with nine assists and Kristaps Porzingis added 26 points and nine rebounds to lead Boston to their ninth victory in 10 games, a victory over Detroit.

Derrick White had 14 points and 11 assists and Payton Pritchard scored 19 points off the bench for Boston. The Celtics scored 12 straight to take an 18-4 lead less than four minutes into the game and led by 20.

The Celtics held a a double-digit lead until the fourth quarter, when Detroit hit four straight 3-pointers to come within eight points, 109-101, and force Boston coach Joe Mazzulla to put Brown back in. The Pistons cut it to five in the final minute on Tobias Harris' 3-pointer, but Pritchard's 3 sealed it.

Cade Cunningham had 27 points, 14 assists and nine rebounds for Detroit. Harris also scored 27 points, and Malik Beasley had 23 off the bench.

MAGIC 106, 76ERS 102

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Franz Wagner scored 35 points and Jalen Suggs had 17 to lead Orlando to a win over Philadelphia.

Wagner made 12 of 23 shots from the floor with a 3-pointer and converted all 10 free throws to lead the Magic past the short-handed Sixers.

Philadelphia was not at full strength. Joel Embiid, Paul George, Andre Drummond and Kyle Lowry sat out due to injuries or rest.

An expected Eastern Conference favorite in the preseason, the Sixers dropped to 5-15. Coach Nick Nurse said there was a chance Embiid, who has played only four games this season, could play Friday when the teams play again in Philadelphia.

Wagner scored 25 points through three quarters before snapping a tie game in the fourth and helping the Magic stretch the lead.

Suggs hit four of Orlando's eight 3-pointers.

Jared McCain, Philadelphia's first-round pick who has emerged as an early Rookie of the Year candidate, scored 24 points. Tyrese Maxey had 16.

NETS 99, PACERS 90

NEW YORK (AP)—Cam Johnson scored 26 points, Nic Claxton had 16 and Brooklyn beat Indiana to end a three-game losing streak.

Shake Milton had 15 points off the bench for the Nets.

T.J. McConnell had 14 points for Indiana, and Tyrese Haliburton had 13. The Pacers have lost four in a row and seven of 10.

After Indiana's Pascal Siakam scored four consecutive points to tie it at 80 with 8:08 left, the Nets responded with a 10-0 run—making it 90-80 on Jaylen Wilson's basket with 5:57 remaining.

HAWKS 119, BUCKS 104

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Jalen Johnson had 23 points and 13 rebounds and Atlanta halted Milwaukee's winning streak at seven games.

De'Andre Hunter scored 20 points, Trae Young 17, Bogdan Bogdanovic 15, Onyeka Okongwu 13 and Zaccharie Risacher 12 as the Hawks extended their winning streak to five games. Clint Capela added 17 rebounds.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 30 points and 10 rebounds to lead Milwaukee. Damian Lillard added 25 points and Gary Trent Jr. had 11 points off the bench. Taurean Prince, the league's leading 3-point shooter had seven points in the first quarter for Milwaukee, but didn't score again until late in the fourth, finishing with 10 points.

The Hawks improved to 12-11 while Milwaukee slipped to 11-10. The teams are neck-and-neck for fifth place in the Eastern Conference.

TIMBERWOLVES 108, CLIPPERS 80

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Julius Randle scored 16 of his 20 points in the first quarter, Anthony Edwards added 16 and Minnesota rolled to a victory over Los Angeles.

Randle had all of his points in the first half, including four 3-pointers, to help Minnesota win its third straight after losing four in a row. The Timberwolves were up by 27 at halftime and their largest lead was 41 in the second half.

Bones Hyland led the Clippers with 18 points, including a season-high five 3-pointers. Derrick Jones Jr. scored 14 points.

The Clippers had their nine-game home winning streak snapped.

NBA Cup quarterfinals: Bucks-Magic, Knicks-Hawks, Rockets-Warriors, Thunder-Mavericks

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Milwaukee and New York are back in the NBA Cup quarterfinals, just like they were a year ago.

The other six remaining Cup contenders—Oklahoma City, Golden State, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta and Orlando—are heading there for the first time.

Group play in the NBA Cup is over and next week's quarterfinal matchups are set: Orlando goes to Milwaukee and Atlanta will visit New York on the Eastern Conference side of the bracket next week, while Oklahoma City will host to Dallas and Houston will host Golden State in the Western Conference quarters.

Milwaukee (4-0) clinched its berth by beating Detroit to win East Group B on Tuesday, while New York (4-0) beat Orlando (3-1) to win East Group A. The Magic wound up as the East's wild-card by winning a point-differential tiebreaker over Boston. Atlanta (3-1) had previously wrapped up East Group C, largely because of a one-point win over the Celtics on Nov. 12.

Oklahoma City's win over Utah wound up giving the Thunder the West Group B title, and the Thunder joined Houston (West Group A) and Golden State (West Group C) as qualifiers; the Rockets and Warriors had clinched before Tuesday night. And Dallas rallied from a 15-point fourth-quarter deficit to beat Memphis and clinch the West wild-card spot.

"I like this Cup," Mavericks star Luka Doncic said.

The four quarterfinal winners will meet in the semifinals at Las Vegas on Dec. 14, and the title game is there on Dec. 17.

"They put a tournament in front of us and we want to win it. And we said that early on," Bucks coach Doc Rivers said. "We're 4-0 but we still have a lot of work to do, but the bottom line is, we earned a chance to play at home—I think."

Even in Year 2 of the event, some still aren't clear on all the rules. Yes, Doc, you'll be at home for the quarters.

All the Magic had to do to clinch the wild-card spot was not lose by more than 37 points in order to stay ahead of Boston in the point-differential race. They found them trailing by — you guessed it — 37 points at New York late in the third quarter.

The Magic outscored the Knicks 40-18 the rest of the way, losing by 15 on the scoreboard but winning over the Celtics in the wild-card race.

"We earned our way into the quarterfinal," Magic forward Franz Wagner said. "Obviously, not our best game today but that's why you play every minute in the other games. It feels weird after a game like this to advance, but that's just part of it."

The Magic got through thanks to the point differential. The Thunder edged Phoenix for the West Group B title on a head-to-head tiebreaker—both went 3-1 in group play, but the Suns' loss was to Oklahoma City—and point differential wound up making OKC the top seed out West over Houston.

"I don't really know much about the Cup and how it works and everything," Thunder guard Cason Wallace said. "I just know I want to win."

NBA Cup quarterfinals schedule

Dec. 10: Orlando at Milwaukee, Dallas at Oklahoma City.

Dec. 11: Atlanta at New York, Golden State at Houston.

Regular-season schedule updates

Games were added to the regular season schedules for the 22 teams that did not make the NBA Cup quarterfinals.

Dec. 12: Detroit at Boston, Toronto at Miami, Sacramento at New Orleans.

Dec. 13: Washington at Cleveland, Indiana at Philadelphia, L.A. Lakers at Minnesota, Brooklyn at Memphis, Charlotte at Chicago, L.A. Clippers at Denver, Phoenix at Utah, San Antonio at Portland.

Dec. 15: New Orleans at Indiana, Boston at Washington, Minnesota at San Antonio, Portland at Phoenix, Memphis at L.A. Lakers.

Dec. 16: Philadelphia at Charlotte, Miami at Detroit, Chicago at Toronto, Cleveland at Brooklyn, Denver at Sacramento, Utah at L.A. Clippers.

(Quarterfinal game losers will face another quarterfinal game loser in a regular season contest on either Dec. 15 or Dec. 16.)

QB Tua Tagovailoa shoulders blame for Dolphins' 5-7 start

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)—Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa led the NFL in passing yards in 2023, and he has been just as sharp for much of this season.

But on Wednesday, Tagovailoa shouldered a share of the blame for what he called a surprising 5-7 start, saying his month-long stint on injured reserve with a concussion played a huge part in the way this season has unfolded.

"I don't think that (record) shows the character of who we are as a team," Tagovailoa said. "It doesn't show the work that we've put in this offseason together.

"Nobody else will say it but me, and I feel like this has a lot to do with myself, obviously putting myself in harm's way in the second game, going down and basically leaving my guys out to dry ... I do take heart to that as well and don't want to do that to my guys again."

The Dolphins looked like they were returning to last season's form during a recent three-game winning streak, but questions about Miami's toughness resurfaced after a poor performance at frigid Lambeau Field last Thursday, when the temperature at kickoff was around 27 degrees.

Miami missed 20 tackles, per Next Gen Stats, and allowed 114 yards on the ground while only rushing for 39 yards. Tagovailoa was sacked five times.

AP

Miami Dolphins quarterback Tua Tagovailoa throws a pass during the first half of an NFL football game against the Green Bay Packers Thursday, Nov. 28, 2024, in Green Bay, Wis.

The Dolphins have lost their past 12 regular-season or postseason games in which the temperature at kickoff was 40 degrees or lower, with more potential cold weather games coming up at Houston, Cleveland and the New York Jets later this season. Miami was 4-10 in games played in December or later in the past two seasons.

"Collectively you've got to all have that same mindset," Tagovailoa said of Miami's toughness. "That's why we have team football, that's why you're in team sports. I think you've got to look at it as, are you mentally tough and are you physically tough? They have to go hand in hand. If one of those things has a kink in it, it could go one way or the other."

A few weeks after former Dolphins safety DeShon Elliott said the Dolphins were "soft" when he played there, linebacker Jordyn Brooks criticized his team's toughness after losing to Green Bay.

"I feel like we let the elements control the way we played," Brooks said after the 30-17 loss. "As a group, I thought we were soft. Simple as that."

Coach Mike McDaniel said he expects all kinds of criticisms to come when the team fails to reach expectations, but added that he uses the game tape to measure toughness.

"If I have an example of weak-mindedness or situations where a guy is turning something down or how he's loafing because of a result, those are things I can coach," McDaniel said.

McDaniel added he didn't see anything on the tape to suggest players weren't giving full effort, but he did see many instances of missed tackles because of straining and poor technique—not bringing their feet through the tackle—which got worse as the game went on.

He also said players would have insisted he bench teammates if they were "loafing" or turning down assignments, which he indicated didn't happen.

"I'm very aware that the narrative exists," McDaniel said, "and with absolute certainty, I know that the narrative will exist unless it changes. There's one way to change it. And that's winning a game against the New York Jets.

"And you know what? People still might not call you tough. Cool. I take it very serious as a head coach to be responsible for things that can help to be accountable and to bring forth information that's actually helpful, not finger pointing."

Some Dolphins players disagreed with the notion the team isn't tough enough.

"I guess we've got to prove it wrong," said defensive tackle Zach Sieler. "If people think that, we've got to go out there and beat it. I don't think that's the case. I think we play physically up front. I think we play physically all around. I think we've got to make sure we're showing that on Sunday."

Cousins looking to avoid interceptions, have bounce-back game in Minnesota homecoming

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. (AP)—This was not the homecoming scenario Kirk Cousins would have scripted.

Cousins' return to Minnesota, his NFL home from 2018 through 2023, on Sunday comes as he is hearing speculation about his job security in Atlanta. Cousins has thrown six interceptions with no touchdowns in the Falcons' three-game losing streak. That includes four picks in last week's 17-13 loss to the Los Angeles Chargers, his most in a decade.

"It's kind of the challenge always in pro football to be able to get back up off the mat and get back going," Cousins said after Wednesday's practice.

A vote of confidence from coach Raheem Morris can't silence suggestions that it's time to give rookie first-round pick Michael Penix Jr. a chance to jump-start the Falcons' struggling offense. Morris said Sunday he didn't consider removing Cousins from the game, and he repeated his support for the veteran on Wednesday.

"Got to go to Minnesota and get a big-time win and Kirk's ready to go," Morris said before acknowledging Cousins must bounce back from "obviously a tough game."

"You know, realistically, man he is built for this and he's ready to go," Morris said.

The losing streak has left the Falcons (6-6) struggling to remain on top of the weak NFC South. They hold the tiebreaker advantage with Tampa Bay (6-6), but need Cousins to end his turnover streak.

Cousins, 36, was expected to be the reliable leader on offense after he signed a four-year, $180 million contract. He will be in the spotlight for all the wrong reasons. He said he expects a loud reception from Minnesota's fans.

"They're great fans, great football fans," Cousins said. "As a result I think they'll make it as hostile as they can for us."

Cousins ranks fifth in the league with 3,052 passing yards. He has 17 touchdown passes and his 13 interceptions are only one shy of his career high.

Cousins insists he feels strong in his return from last season's torn Achilles tendon. He was critical of his mental mistakes in the loss to the Chargers. He said he rushed some passes, sometimes lacking the necessary velocity on his throws and giving defensive backs the opportunity to step in front of receivers for interceptions.

Atlanta offensive coordinator Zac Robinson also said Cousins' lack of velocity on his throws "just goes back to, you know, decisiveness, being decisive when you do cut it loose. Certainly those things happen with quarterbacks. There might be times where, you know, you're not as convicted on a throw. And it shows by the way the football comes out."

Morris said he still has confidence in Cousins' arm and the mental side to his game.

"He's done a great job with us, and I have no real qualms about him bouncing back and him being able to play the game the way it needs to be done," Morris said. "He's still an elite processor. He has the ability to make all the throws. He's shown that throughout the year."

Vikings defensive coordinator Brian Flores also said he expects Cousins will shake out of his slump.

"I know the narrative is he had a tough game last week, but he's played some good football," Flores said. "I think the people in this building know what Kirk can do. He's a very, very good quarterback."

Added Flores: "He's a bounce-back type of guy, as we all know. I'm expecting his best, the best version of Kirk, the best version of that offense. It's going to be a major challenge for us."

Atlanta's offensive production has dipped while the veteran quarterback's turnovers have been on the rise. The Falcons were held to under 20 points in each of their three straight losses.

"Have to just believe that tough times don't last, tough people do," Cousins said. "You have to keep pushing."

NFL tweaks its drug policy, increasing levels for a positive THC level test

The NFL and the league's players' union agreed to modify their substance abuse policy, increasing the THC level for a positive test, according to a memo that was sent to agents and players on Wednesday.

The positive THC level was increased from 150 ng/ml (nanograms per milliliter) to 350 ng/ml, per the memo, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

Tetrahydrocannabinol is the substance that's primarily responsible for the effects of marijuana on a person's mental state.

Teams will only be informed of the penalty and that the violation was caused by a positive test and/or a missed test. They will no longer be notified of the substance which caused the positive.

The medical director may test players in the program for fentanyl if clinically indicated. There will be no discipline for a positive test. However, failing to comply with a mandatory meeting regarding fentanyl will result in a $15,000 fine.

Fines have been reduced for positive tests. A fine for a second missed test changed from a one-game fine to $45,000. The number of missed tests will be reset to zero if a period of time goes by without any additional missed tests.

All players who currently have discipline pending for missed tests will have those missed tests excused. They will be considered as having no missed tests.

Also, the language regarding improper use of prescription drugs has been clarified.

Players will be fined $15,000 for recording and posting the collection process on social media.

The league and the NFLPA also tweaked the performance-enhancing substances policy.

The testing window from the time of notification to the time of test has been extended. Suspended players under some circumstances will be reinstated after a suspension—and therefore get paid—even if they still test positive. ***(AP)***

Undefeated Lady Rays sting Dolphins, 36-20

LEIGH GASES

Marianas High School players flank Saipan Southern High School's Haani Passi during the rebound after a free throw in their game in the 2024-2025 IT&E InterschXolastic Girls High School Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Saipan Southern High School's Jahsmin Ramon goes for a contested layup in their game against Marianas High School in the 2024-2025 IT&E Interscholastic Girls High School Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

Saipan Southern High School's Azriel Fatialofa connects with the ball during tip-off in their game against Marianas High School in the 2024-2025 IT&E Interscholastic Girls High School Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The undefeated Saipan Southern High School Lady Manta Rays stung the Marianas High School Lady Dolphins, 36-20, in their finals rematch last Wednesday in the 2024-2025 IT&E Interscholastic Girls High School Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The court wasn't as calm as the ocean that surrounds the island, as the tension and electricity of the matchup was palpable in the air.

At the tip-off, SSHS' Azriel Fatialofa directed the ball to her teammate and sister, Aiyana, who converted a layup just five seconds in—which set the tone for the entirety of the game. The Lady Rays swam through the court with a sense of urgency that was unmatched and dropped eight points even before MHS could swish the net.

MHS finally got on board from a free throw made by Jax Dela Rosa, but at this point with 13 minutes left, SSHS led, 13-1.

SSHS thrived in the fast-break plays as they left MHS reeling, trying to catch up to the speedy Lady Rays. By the sixth minute mark, SSHS led in double digits, 15-5.

The Lady Rays attacked the bucket until the first half ended and were rewarded with five more points, while the Lady Dolphins could only score two more for a 20-7 game.

MHS tried to make a comeback in the last half, but exhaustion was evident as they tried to keep pace with the basket-hungry Lady Rays. The Fatialofa sisters continued to make tsunami efforts from any range and led the team to victory with the help of their teammates, leaving the Lady Dolphins beached at the shores, 36-20.

In other results that night, Saipan International School blew by Kagman High School, 14-11, and SSHS JV took down MHS JV, 28-15.

With SSHS varsity's win, they have won all six of their regular season games and are the top seed heading into the playoffs.

The playoffs are set for Wednesday, Dec. 11, and Thursday, Dec. 12, with the championship rounds on Friday, Dec. 13.

SSHS 36 – Azriel Fatialofa 14, Aiyana Fatialofa 5, Yamada 4, Calage 4, Diaz 4, Ramon 3, Mendiola 2.

MHS 20 – Estella 6, George 5, Relucio 4, Dela Rosa 3, Zandueta 2.

Scoring by halves: 20-7, 36-20.

KANOA

From page 16

punched their ticket into the finals after they slipped past Paire, 4-3.

Shirley's Raven Anderson set the tone for her team as she attacked the goal and got one in the 13th minute. Their relentless attacks then paid off again 10 minutes later as Anderson made it a 2-0 game.

Paire didn't just stand idly by though and finally found an opening in the 29th minute to get within 1, 1-2, off the cleat of Jannah Casarino.

However, Shirley's Melody Johnson boosted their lead once more in the 37th, 3-1. An intense yet quiet battle then ensued as both teams tried to get the better of the other. No goals were let through by either keeper until Casarino slotted one for another close game, 2-3, in the 60th minute.

Shirley's Jerlayn Castillo then made the game-changing goal in the 69th to put them up, 4-2, as Paire's Casarino completed her hat-trick just three minutes later. Castillo's goal was the difference maker as they held on to win by one, 4-3.

The finals is set for Sunday, Dec. 8, at 4:40pm.

BLUE

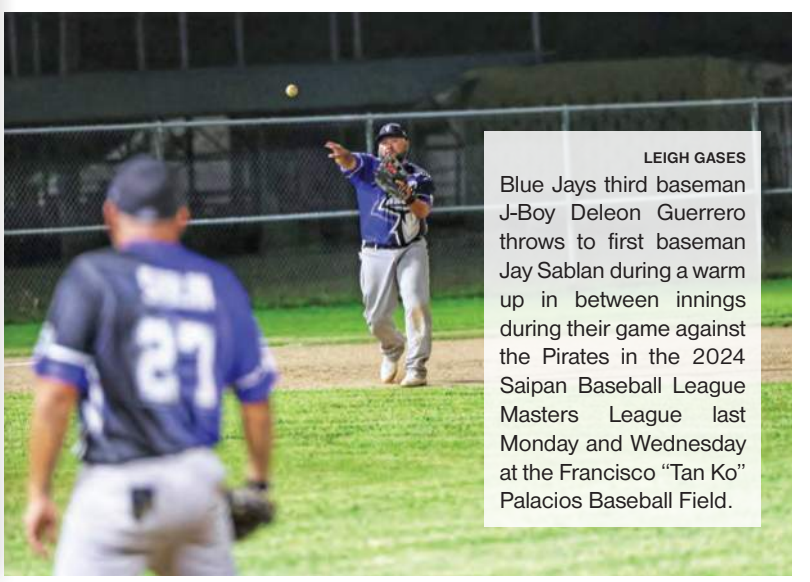
From page 16

bombarded Pirates pitching with an explosion of seven runs in the last inning for a 16-4 game. The Pirates then scored just one more run and walked the plank to their second loss of the season.

Meanwhile, last Wednesday, the Brewers pierced the Marlins, 18-8.

The game quickly became lopsided after the Brewers thrashed the Marlins' pitching staff in the third inning with five runs. They came back even stronger in the fourth as they reeled in 11 for an 18-4 lead.

The Marlins then scored four more, but they failed to produce in the last inning and succumbed to a loss.



LEIGH GASES

Blue Jays third baseman J-Boy Deleon Guerrero throws to first baseman Jay Sablan during a warm up in between innings during their game against the Pirates in the 2024 Saipan Baseball League Masters League last Monday and Wednesday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

OVERSEAS

From page 16

having the experience of those years of riding and racing overseas and locally."

Aside from Guam and Saipan, Cepeda said he also raced in Japan and the Philippines.

"I would like to dedicate this win to my whole team and my sponsors. My support systems are my uncles Al Kilgore and Martin Pangelinan and my other half, Shay."

He went on to name his sponsors—Calvo's Insurance, Peak Renovations, SPPC Fuel 76 Guam, Crowns Guam, Lujans Towing, John Burch Baja Bash, One Stop Auto Guam, IDI Distributors, and Yamaha Guam.

Cepeda and the rest of the Guam Motocross Club riders, who won 11 of the 13 classes at stake in the Turkey Cross Motocross Race 2024, did so sans a track to train on.

"It was hard to train for the event because of the closing of our track in Guam for more than a year and a half. I haven't really ridden that much or raced."

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	18	4	.818	–
New York	13	8	.619	4½
Brooklyn	10	13	.435	8½
Toronto	7	15	.318	11
Philadelphia	5	15	.250	12
Southeast Division				
Orlando	16	8	.667	–
Atlanta	12	11	.522	3½
Miami	10	10	.500	4
Charlotte	6	15	.286	8½
Washington	2	17	.105	11½
Central Division				
Cleveland	19	3	.864	–
Milwaukee	11	10	.524	7½
Chicago	9	13	.409	10
Indiana	9	14	.391	10½
Detroit	9	15	.375	11

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	15	7	.682	–
Dallas	14	8	.636	1
Memphis	14	8	.636	1
San Antonio	11	10	.524	3½
New Orleans	4	18	.182	11
Northwest Division				
Oklahoma City	16	5	.762	–
Denver	11	8	.579	4
Minnesota	11	10	.524	5
Portland	8	14	.364	8½
Utah	4	17	.190	12
Pacific Division				
Phoenix	12	8	.600	–
Golden State	12	8	.600	–
L.A. Clippers	14	10	.583	–
L.A. Lakers	12	10	.545	1
Sacramento	10	12	.455	3

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Heat set assists record in blowout win over Lakers.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Undefeated Lady Rays sting Dolphins, 36-20.

PAGE 15

Kanoa, Shirley's to clash in Dove A finals

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club and Shirley's FC are clashing in the finals of the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League after eliminating their foes in the semis last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Kanoa, No. 3 seed in the regular season, claimed the first finals spot after they upset No. 2 seed MP United Pink, 2-0.

The orange team tasted sweet victory as they made light work of the girls in pink. Kanoa's defenses held down a goal-hungry MPU team and pulled off an upset as they could not get on the board.

Kanoa's Audrey Castro got down to business quickly and just five minutes in, scored their first goal for an early 1-0 lead.

MPU struggled for possession and after the first half, still came up empty. Kanoa had a scoring break until the 31st when Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez doubled their lead, 2-0. From there, Kanoa's defenses tightened and their keeper didn't let up. In the end, they secured their finals spot without a peep from MPU.

Then, No. 1 seed Shirley's

See KANOA on Page 15

NMIFA
A Paire player, right, and a Kanoa player sprint toward a loose ball during their semis game in the 2024 Fall Dove Women's League after eliminating their foes in the semis last Wednesday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

Overseas experience pays off for Cepeda

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

James "J.R." Cepeda led Guam's domination of Saipan riders during last weekend's Marianas Racing Association's Turkey Cross Motocross Race 2024 at the Cowtown Raceway Park.

The 27-year-old gobbled up the track aboard his Yamaha yz450f enroute to sweeping the Expert Class with 75 points. He actually was part of a Guam 1-2-3 finish in the division as Tim Wenden and Blaze Aiken finished second and third with 69 points and 60 points, respectively.

"The track was awesome and really fun. The weather was perfect and I enjoyed being on Saipan so much. The secret for winning I believe is having a good support system and sponsors. I would also attribute this to

See OVERSEAS on Page 15

SONNIE SABLAN
Guam's James "J.R." Cepeda in action during last weekend's Marianas Racing Association's Turkey Cross Motocross Race 2024 at the Cowtown Raceway Park.

Blue Jays, Brewers nip foes in SBL

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Blue Jays and Brewers nipped their respective foes in the 2024 Saipan Baseball League Masters League last Monday and Wednesday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The Blue Jays gave the defending champions Pirates a run for their money as they bested them, 16-5, last Monday.

The Pirates' all-around stuff wasn't there that night, but the Blue Jays were firing on all cylinders. From the first pitch, the Blue Jays showed off decent swings and came up with three runs made by J-Boy Deleon Guerrero, Marino Hiroichi, and Rick Bauer in the first inning for an early lead.

The Pirates could only get one through for a 1-3 game at the end of the first. Then, the Blue Jays followed up with more firepower as they scored one in the second, then tacked on four more in the third to lead, 8-1.

The Pirates' bats then came alive at the bottom of the third as Mark Toves, Eric Palacios, and Derek Sasamoto halved the lead, 4-8.

However, the Blue Jays added one run in the fifth, then

See BLUE on Page 15

LEIGH GASES
Blue Jays' Brad Ruszala hi-fives pitcher Alvin Takai after he caught a comebacker on the mound, then proceeded to complete a double play at second base for the third out during their game against the Pirates in the 2024 Saipan Baseball League Masters League last Monday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

LEIGH GASES
Blue Jays shortstop Shawn Matsutaro applies the tag just in time on a Pirates player attempting to steal second during their game in the 2024 Saipan Baseball League Masters League last Monday and Wednesday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.